

OCTOBER 2004 № 143

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Joe Warden's
Gallery Of Sound



INTERPOL

POSTPUNK ANTICS

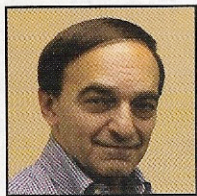


REM Solar Power

GREEN DAY Walk Idiot Walk

JIMMY EAT WORLD Looking Into Their *Futures*

THE MUSIC AUTHORITY JOE NARDONE, SR.



CONSUMER ELECTRONICS — CDs — DVDs — GAMES

It's not as bad as many people think. As a matter of fact, the number of CDs sold this year is more than last year at this time. They're up a whopping 9%, which is great considering the competition out there for the entertainment dollar.

DVD sales are going through the roof and games aren't far behind. Consider that the price of a movie is higher than it's ever been.

The concert business is coming through a very bad summer season with a few exceptions. Could it be the price of the tickets? Parking? Price of food and refreshments?

One of the few bright spots in this summer's largely disappointing concert season has been the Bob Dylan/Willie Nelson tour of minor league ballparks.

The ticket price was a very reasonable \$45 for both Bob and Willie. There were no ridiculously high Ticketmaster fees, beers were \$4.00 instead of \$10.00 and kids under 12 got in free.

This tour was done by Jam Productions, who are saying similar future tours are planned. Several artists have contacted them to express their interest.

We have a minor league stadium in our back yard that would be a great location for that type of concert. Unless you like the prices at Montage.

Back to the surge of CD sales and some of the reasons. As all other forms of entertainment keep raising their prices, compact disc prices have actually come down! This was started by Universal Distributing, the largest

distributor in the world, and other labels are following their lead to give real value to some of the greatest recordings in their catalog.

Record companies and their groups, producers and more have realized they could not continue to put out albums with one or two good songs and just "fillers" for the rest of the album. Record buyers have become too sophisticated to buy albums with too much "fill."

The Gallery of Sound has cooperated with all labels who have lowered prices and will continue to lower prices as they are released. Many record stores, especially those who operate primarily in malls, have not lowered their prices. I suggest you compare our prices with those of other stores. You will be pleasantly surprised to see that we are much lower than traditional record stores in the malls.

THE FUTURE

I always look forward to attending the annual consumer electronics show every January in Las Vegas.

It is truly where you see tomorrow—today.

Just about anything new in electronics is introduced at this show. Big screen TV—flat screens—new DVD hardware—closed circuit systems.

The "Hottest Technology Under the Sun" is the theme for this year's show. We will see the newest cell phones, digital imaging, gaming graphics, home theater and more!

Speakers scheduled are leaders in the industry—Bill Gates (Microsoft)—Mike Ramsay (Tivo)—Craig Barrett (Intel). Bill Gates always kicks off the show with exciting news. We all look forward to hearing his dynamic speeches.

LAST QUARTER

Going forward into the last quarter of this year we are all excited about great new releases and the continued promise of lower prices.

And, as always... "If you're not happy... I want to know."

Call me anytime.

Joe Nardone, Sr.

CHECK OUT OUR NEW PLATINUM RECORD CLUB VALUABLE REWARDS FOR LOYAL CUSTOMERS



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GALLERY OF SOUND PAY!**

Register now at any Gallery of Sound store location and start building store credit. Anyone can join. And it's FREE!

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As soon as you reach \$200 you will get an instant \$10 store credit for your next store purchase.

The card will have future uses for cd trade-ins and special sales.

october
2004

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“NEWsbites” ^{HOT}



They were the Ramones: (l-r) Johnny, Dee Dee, Tommy and Joey

Johnny Ramone

1948-2004

After a five-year bout with prostate cancer, guitarist Johnny Ramone (born John Cummings) died in his sleep last month, attended to by friends such as Eddie Vedder and Rob Zombie. Johnny was 55; he'd been hospitalized in June, and his condition had deteriorated in recent months. Johnny is the third Ramone to pass on in the last few years: singer Joey Ramone died of lymphatic cancer in 2001, and bassist Dee Dee Ramone died of a drug overdose the following year.

Unlike other musicians credited with defining punk guitar, such as Johnny Thun-

ders or Robert Quine, Johnny's major contributions were largely rhythmic. Because after all the Ramones were—as any band so stripped-down would have to be—a rhythm band at heart. As critic Rob Sheffield has noted, the band's M.O. basically mirrored what was going on in rap—cut all the unnecessary crap out of a song and just repeat your favorite parts till you can't take the joy no more. And if initial drummer Tommy established their beat, Johnny's guitar fleshed it out.

Often criticized as acerbic and standoffish, Johnny's public image was a striking

contrast to that of the much-beloved Joey. At points in the band's career, Johnny was the Ramones acting manager, and he exerted strong—sometimes harsh—creative and business control over his bandmates. But though his stance as an outspoken Reagan Republican was unpopular in the punk/indie world, he did acquiesce and perform the band's 1985 protest number “Bonzo Goes To Bitburg” and established a friendship with outspoken lefty Vedder. In many ways, he was the hardheaded reality principle that made the Ramones utopia possible.



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Wreck on the Highway

**TWISTA INJURED,
BLUESMAN'S SON KILLED**

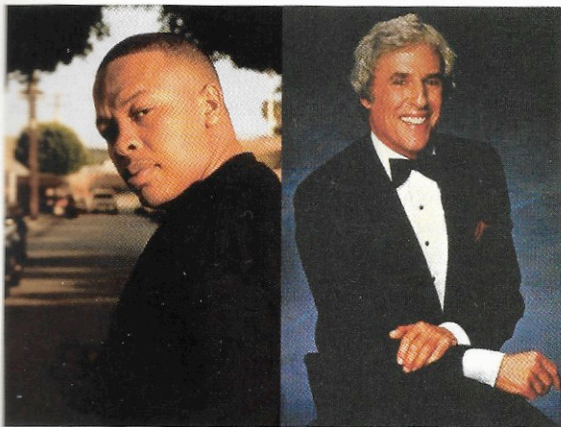
Early morning on September 7, Twista's tour van flipped over six times on Interstate 90 near the border of Pennsylvania and Ohio, tossing the rapper and five passengers onto a highway median. (The driver, Twista's cousin Otis Bankhead, was not flung from the vehicle—thank God he's not too cool for the safe belt.) Twista suffered minor injuries and is currently home recovering. His bodyguard Arthur "Butch" Dixon, son of bluesman Willie Dixon, was not so fortunate, and died in the hospital of injuries sustained in the accident. The van was en route to Chicago, returning from a show in Syracuse. Authorities determined Bankhead was suffering from fatigue, and no charges have been brought.



No Samples Cleared

APPEALS COURT: HIP-HOP NEITHER CREATIVE NOR SIGNIFICANT

In overturning a lower court decision last month, the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati placed further restrictions on the sampling process, which it compared to piracy: "If you cannot pirate the whole sound recording, can you 'lift' or 'sample' something less than the whole? Our answer to that question is in the negative." The ruling says artists must pay for not only large samples of another artist's work, but also snippets that may have been altered beyond recognition. The case centers around the 1990 N.W.A. song "100 Miles and Runnin'," which samples three notes of guitar from Funkadelic's "Get Off Your Ass and Jam." The two-second snippet was pitch-altered and looped to extend to 16 beats. The lower court had ruled that the sample "did not rise to the level of legally cognizable appropriation," but the Appeals Court differed. "We do not see this as stifling creativity in any significant way," the Court announced in its decision, boldly flaunting its ignorance of the past quarter-century of popular music.



Go See the Doctor

**BURT BACHARACH PAIRS OFF
WITH DR. DRE**

Word has it that orchestral pop fancy-pants Burt Bacharach has signed on to collaborate with Dr. Dre, which is a bit of a surprise. Not on Dre's end—the producer's unhealthy attraction to flutes makes Bacharach an obvious dream date, but who would ever have expected the creator of "What the World Needs Now Is Love" to be so fond of working with humorless cranks? First Elvis

Costello, and now West Coast hip-hop's dourest of screwfaces. Dre has already sent Bacharach a set of tracks to write over. "It's a challenging, freeing feeling to take an existing format—like these rigid, four-bar loops—and to see what you can write on top of it," Bacharach told the *Denver Post*. "It's hard and challenging too, because it does have some restrictions."

I THINK THEY GOT HER NUMBER

Singer Laura Branigan, best known for the '80s synthpop hit "Gloria" died from a brain aneurism last month at the age of 47. Branigan died in her sleep at her home in East Quogue, New York. She had reportedly complained to family members about headaches, but had not seen a doctor for them.

THE ADVENTURES OF GRANDMASTER FLASH IN THE ROCK AND ROLL HALL OF FAME

Rap may finally bust its way into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in '05, with Grandmaster Flash & the Furious Five on the ballot. The Sex Pistols are also contenders, as well as U2, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Patti Smith, the Stooges, Conway Twitty, Gram Parsons, Randy Newman, the O'Jays, Percy Sledge and Wanda Jackson.

ALL THEIR FAVORITE FRUIT

When Apple Computers first came to existence, the Beatles, who had established a company called Apple Corps, sued over the use of the name—and won. In addition to a hefty cash settlement, the Beatles secured a promise from Apple never ever to go into the music biz. Then folks started attaching speakers to their computers and listening to music, and the band's lawyers won a breach of contract suit against the computer company. Fast forward to the present day and a snazzy new gadget called the iPod. Well, guess who's back in court? The Beatles' winnings are currently around \$50 million.

THIS JUST IN

Britney: Now you can pay to smell like her. **Avril:** Reportedly *not* engaged to that Sum 41 dude. **Madonna:** Like the Middle East doesn't have enough trouble. **Michael:** Admits to paying off accuser in 1990. **Courtney:** Um, actually, we lost track...



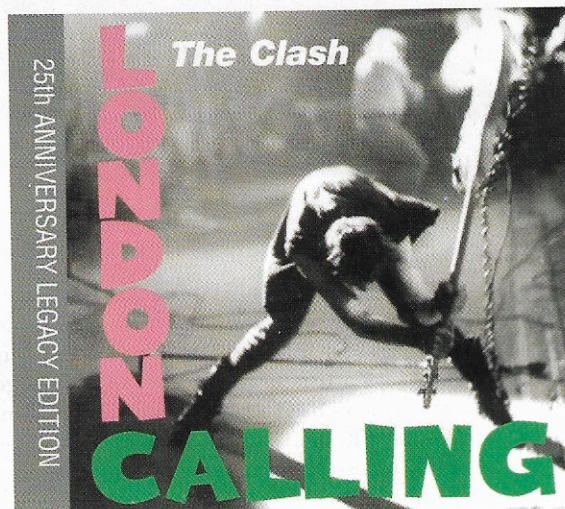
USEFUL NOISE / BY KEITH HARRIS

POLITICKING TO THE BEAT

There's an election going on, and nobody quite knows what to do about it. For a country that yaps so much, we're curiously inept when it comes to communicating, so instead we pump up the volume and hope we get heard first. Or last. Or at all. Eventually we start hypocritically harshing on musicians who join the din, wailing our predictable chorus that celebrities should "stay out of politics" or that "political music is boring." Political pop stars are "traitors" to rock and roll's antiestablishment ethos, rants Alice Cooper, flailing about for any shtick that'll keep those amateur golf tournament invites coming.

But you can no more keep politics out of popular music than you can keep out sex or commerce or violence or spirituality. Pop is the art that results from human beings bumping into one another, and which discerns whether the bumping is done sexually or commercially or violently or spiritually or politically. Of course, that doesn't mean it's always particularly sharp about that discerning. Sure Jadakiss indulges in conspiracy paranoia too wack to deserve the term "theory" on "Why?" ("Why did Bush knock down the towers?"—uh, because he didn't?)—would you really expect him to be any less clueless about politics than he is about good sex?

Nor is it any surprise that, on Fat Wreck Chords's two *Rock Against Bush* compilations, Sleater-Kinney soar where Pennywise stumble; it ever shall be thus. When Bush took office, there was loose talk among aging punks who came up under Reagan that a Republican president would radi-



calize underground rock again. The most thoughtful of these romantics expressed a hope that a fragmented core could again be galvanized. The most cynical seemed to shrug that maybe we'll never have health care reform, but at least we'll get better Bad Religion records. Well, "Los Angeles Is Burning" is the best Bad Religion song in years. We'll have to wait and see what happens otherwise.

Aside from a Nashville crowd rallied less monolithically around the president than advertised, rockers and rappers largely lean left, and so political pop means Bush-bashing. But not all "political" music is "protest" music. Electing a government is just a one subset of politics, in the same way that reaching orgasm is just one sliver of human sexuality. "Leave me alone and let me do my own damn thing" is just as political a statement as "We need to provide a safety net for the poor"—and insisting that these statements are *not* equally political may be

an even more political statement. Great as S-K's *Rock Against Bush* track, "Off With Your Head," is, their politics were smarter—more varied, more ingrained, more lived—over the course of 2002's *One Beat*.

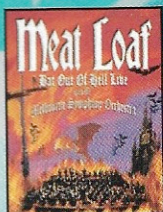
As Robert Christgau has noted, the '60s, inexplicably recalled as a golden age of "political rock," is best known for its anthems of ambivalence: "For What It's Worth," "Revolution," "Street Fighting Man." And punk, with central icons dead junkie Sid Vicious and idealist-cynic John Rotten/Lydon. And so, as political pop comes into question once more, it's fitting that Sony should reissue the Clash's *London Calling*. After

the defiance of the band's first two albums, *London Calling* collects stirring testimonies from the losers. *London Calling* asks what you make of radicalism when the rebellion's gone stale, and from punk to rap, that's been a tough challenge to accept.

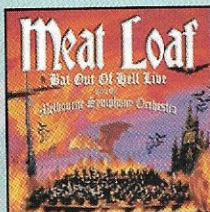
Oh yeah, the *London Calling* reissue is also a bona fide ripoff—you get an extra disc of half-assed demos and a short making-of-the-album DVD. Yet such a boondoggle somehow seems fitting for a band that weathered much worse and was sunk by much less worse. John Lydon may have snidely celebrated the swindle as the essence of human interaction, but the legacy of the Clash proves that such swindles aren't the end of the world. It's the irony the band barks on "Death or Glory"—"He who f***s nuns will later join the church." And there are worse fates. Compromise isn't failure. Hell, failure isn't even failure, not as long as you've got a kickass drummer. ♦

SONIC SANCTUARY

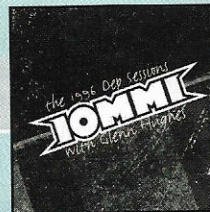
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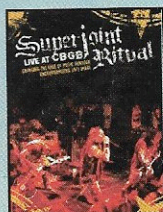
Meat Loaf
BAT OUT OF HELL LIVE WITH THE
MELBOURNE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
DVD \$24.95



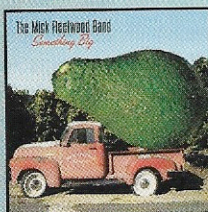
Meat Loaf
BAT OUT OF HELL LIVE WITH
THE MELBOURNE SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA
CD \$13.88



Tommi/Hughes
DEP SESSIONS 1996
CD \$13.88



Superjoint Ritual
LIVE AT CBGB'S
DVD \$15.95



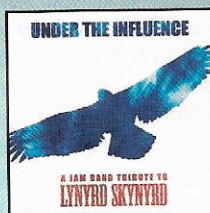
The Mick Fleetwood Band
SOMETHING BIG
CD \$13.88



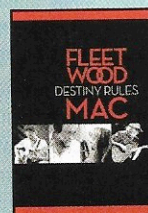
W.A.S.P.
THE NEON GOD-PART 2:
THE DEMISE
CD \$13.88



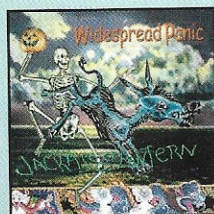
Tegan & Sara
SO JEALOUS
CD \$11.97



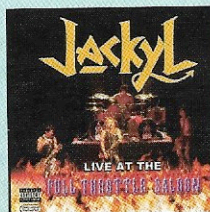
Various Artists
UNDER THE INFLUENCE-A JAM BAND
TO LYNRD SKYNYRD
CD \$13.88



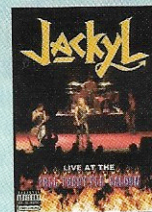
Fleetwood Mac
DESTINY RULES
DVD \$19.95



Widespread Panic
JACKASSOLANTERN
CD \$13.88



Jackyl
LIVE FROM THE FULL THROTTLE SALOON
CD \$13.88



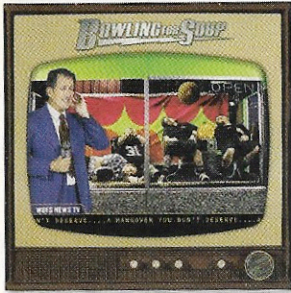
Jackyl
LIVE FROM THE FULL THROTTLE SALOON
DVD \$19.95



Blues Explosion
DAMAGE
CD \$11.97

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CD \$10.99



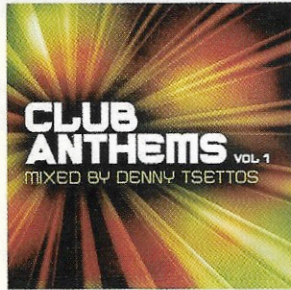
BOWLING FOR SOUP

A Hangover You Don't Deserve

BIO: The Beatles. Carlos Santana. Norah Jones. Bowling for Soup. Musical heavyweights, yes. But what do these acts actually have in common? They've all been nominated for Grammys. Yep, Bowling for Soup, the rockers from Wichita Falls, Texas, scored a nomination in 2003 in the Best Performance Pop by a Duo or Group category for their power-pop sing-along "Girl All the Bad Guys Want."

Ok, so they lost. But joking a side, the nomination did open a lot of doors. Before the group started recording their third record for Jive, *A Hangover You Don't Deserve*, singer

Jaret Reddick created a wish list of songwriters and producers he wanted to work with, including members of Fastball, Nerf Herder, Sugar Ray, the Dixons, SR-71 and Butch Walker, their longtime producer. Thanks in part to their Grammy nod, everyone said yes. The seventeen tracks that make up *A Hangover You Don't Deserve* show off a remarkable amount of musical growth. That's growth, not maturity.



CD \$12.88



VARIOUS ARTISTS

Club Anthems Vol. 1

BIO:

Mynt feat. Kim Sozzi — How Did You Know

Shape: UK — Lola's Theme

Narcotic Thrust — I Like It

Dave Armstrong — Make Your Move

DND feat. Angie Irons — Ex Ex Girlfriend

Stellar Project feat. Brandi Emma — Get Up Stand Up

Junior Jack — Da Hype

Martin Solveig — Rocking Music

Ultra Nate — Free

Despina Vandi — Opa Opa

Danzel — Pump It Up

Reina — If I Close My Eyes

Robbie Rivera — Which Way You're Going

Nelly Furtado — Força

Royal Gigosos — California Dreamin'

Motorcycle — As the Rush Comes

Dan Balan feat. Lucas Prata — Ma Ya Hi



CD \$10.88



CONVERGE

You Fail Me

BIO: The chaotic lure of *You Fail Me*, the new album from iconic punk-metal quartet Converge, is about to blow your unsuspecting mind. Aligning with Epitaph to mark a new chapter in the band's rich history. Converge—steered from its inception by vocalist Jacob Bannon—has been annihilating audiences in-the-know with skill and substance for thirteen years.

Boasting Bannon's unique lyrical vision, throat-ripping screams, and the meticulous, inexplicable power of his bandmates, the Boston-reared group's brute force is flat out

stunning. Evidenced by "Drop Out," the track careens past with amazing speed. Replete with drum rolls so precise, Ben Killer comes off like some man/machine mutation, colliding with bassist Nate Newton's menacing rhythms and guitarist Kurt Ballou's scalding, inventive six-string.

"We feel this record is as relevant, if not more, than any other release under our belts," asserts Bannon. And based on the bone-crunching "Black Cloud" or the savage roar of "Widows," loyal worshippers in the band's Converge cult will not be disappointed.



CD \$13.88



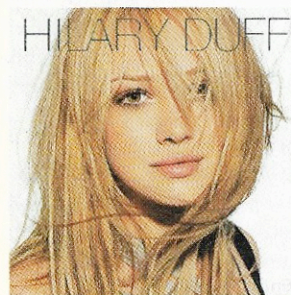
CRADLE OF FILTH

Nymphetamine

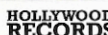
BIO: These are dark days. We live our lives cowering in the shadow of a future black and bleak, snatching all too brief glimpses of romance, hope and humanity, burdened by monochrome drudgery and the stupidity of mankind. The s*** keeps hitting the fan and we're all getting splashed. That's why those of us who live for the moment need a soundtrack that provides both unhindered escapism and a heightened, tangible sense of reality's sensual power. That's why we need Cradle of Filth more than ever. This is a band that caters to the filthy little secrets inside all of us, eliciting those

exhilarating erotic and animal charges that make our time on this planet worth living. Prepare yourselves for a hefty shot of Nymphetamine.

Ten years on from the ominous eruption of their debut album, the UK's premier merchants of darkness have regrouped and found a new home at Roadrunner Records, a label with a suitably metallic past, present and future.



CD \$12.99



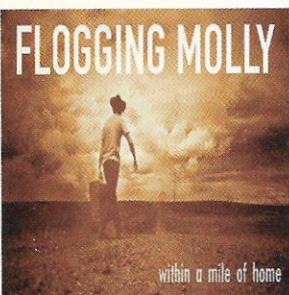
HILARY DUFF

Hilary Duff

BIO: Hilary Duff is one of Hollywood's fastest rising stars. The dynamic young actress has garnered world-wide recognition as the star of Disney Channel's international hit series *Lizzie McGuire* in which she portrays a teen navigating the turbulence of middle school cliques, trendy styles and rites of passage while her animated, brassy alter ego gives running commentary. In May 2003, Duff brought her character to the big screen with the Walt Disney Pictures hit comedy *The Lizzie McGuire Movie*. In addition, Duff co-

starred in March 2003 with Frankie Muniz in the MGM film *Agent Cody Banks*. She's also appeared in *Cheaper by the Dozen* with Steve Martin and Bonnie Hunt, and starred in *Cinderella Story*, a comedy about a Southern California high school student who is transformed from an awkward teen to the most popular girl in school.

Hilary Duff is the follow-up to her hit debut solo album, *Metamorphosis*. Hilary Duff features the hit single "Fly."



CD \$11.97 SIDE ONE DUMMY

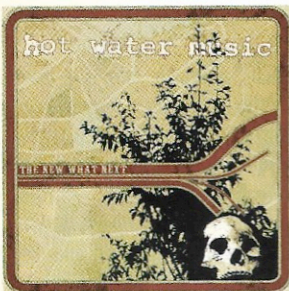
FLOGGING MOLLY

Within a Mile of Home

BIO: *Within a Mile of Home* is the highly anticipated full-length follow-up to 2002's hugely successful *Drunken Lullabies*. *Within a Mile of Home* brings the band's barn-burning punk rock numbers to new levels, as demonstrated on the crowd-pleasing "Seven Deadly Sins." Flogging Molly continues to breed traditional Irish influences and heavy-hearted storytelling with brazen punk rock. At the same time, the ballads that have become welcome staples to Flogging Molly's live show (giving the audience a break from the frenzy) are also stronger than ever. Look for a few surprises this time

around, including a Cajun vibe on "Tomorrow Comes a Day Too Soon" and a guest appearance from Lucinda Williams on "Factory Girls."

"We've developed a really unique sound," says singer Dave King of his seven-piece outfit. "The first time we all got together to play, there was an energy in the room that I'd never experienced in any other band I'd ever been in... and it wasn't due to any single ingredient, instrument or individual."



CD \$10.88 Epitaph

HOT WATER MUSIC

The New What Next

BIO: If it's trite to say Hot Water Music's third album for Epitaph is easily its finest album yet, it's also the goddamn truth. When it comes to forceful, fluid and intricate punk-inspired sounds, few—if any—roar with the kind of expression and precision found on *The New What Next*.

Launched by the expressive, anthemic spark of "Poison," *The New What Next* is a bold musical proclamation that's uniquely paced and often irresistible. From the melodic yet cathartic drive of "End of the Line" to the captivating, infectious riffs that propel the mid-tempo "All Heads Down"

and beyond, bassist Jason Black says the sonic change-ups in place for the follow-up to 2002's *Caution* were intentional.

"We sought out new dynamics, and we went for different tempos and different feels," Black explains. "The only thing we purposely tried to do for this record was make sure each song stood on its own, so they didn't really sound like each other too much."



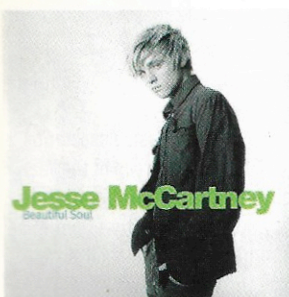
CD \$9.99 456 ENTERTAINMENT

LAST OF THE FAMOUS

The Music or the Misery

BIO: If punk rock rolls in revolutions, then Last of the Famous is the band to turn the music world on its head. Rushing forward with a mix of melodic hardcore and early SST-style punk rock, this four-piece delivers catchy hooks without formula and attitude without the stereotypes. Their debut album, *The Music or the Misery*, captures the first and second-generation influences that define their passion for punk, yet their songs speak to a new generation longing for music with heart and authenticity. The band's members—who previously played in such groups as Youth of Today, Shelter,

Saves the Day, Gorilla Biscuits, Give Up the Ghost, Piebald and Judge—have a history of giving fans something real, and Last of the Famous embraces the challenge of taking that tradition one step higher. *The Music or the Misery* is a cornerstone album for a new punk rock generation in which history, authenticity and solidarity make a difference.



CD \$8.99 HOLLYWOOD RECORDS

JESSE MCCARTNEY

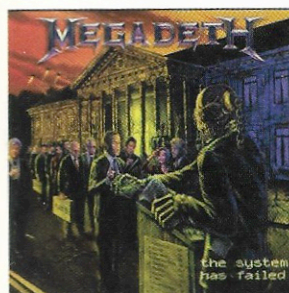
Beautiful Soul

BIO: Jesse McCartney is everywhere these days—Top 10 radio, concert stages, television and movies—and his mesmerizing voice couldn't be more welcome. Yes *Summerland* TV-star Jesse McCartney is a young man of many talents, but it's his drop-dead-beautiful single "Beautiful Soul" that has catapulted the charismatic 17-year-old to the top of the 2004 charts.

Jesse collaborated with some of the music industry's top producers and songwriters to produce the album, including working with Matthew Gerrard (Hilary Duff's hit "Why Not"),

Glen Ballard (Alanis Morissette, Dave Matthews, Christina Aguilera), Desmond Child (Clay Aiken, Aerosmith) and Andreas Carlsson (Britney Spears).

A star at the age of 7, Jesse made his professional debut singing with New York based kids group Sugarbeats, progressing to platinum success with Dreamstreet. He simultaneously developed a thriving acting career, appearing on Broadway in *The King and I* with Hayley Mills and *A Christmas Carol* opposite the great Roger Daltrey of the Who.



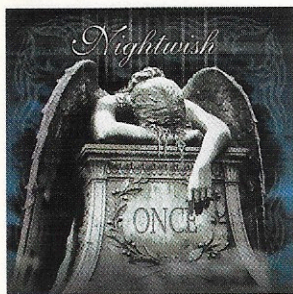
CD \$11.97 Sanctuary

MEGADETH

The System Has Failed

BIO: This is not a return to form. This is not a comeback album. This is, simply, the finest, heaviest, most brutal and punishing Megadeth album Dave Mustaine has ever recorded. Having suffered a debilitating nerve injury in his hand two years ago, Megadeth's future was in serious limbo. Yet *The System Has Failed* returns Megadeth to the top of heavy metal's ruling class. This is Megadeth's crowning achievement. *The System Has Failed* begins with a kick to the aural senses with "Blackmail the Universe" and does not let

up for the next 63 minutes. This is a heavy metal album in the purest sense: Guitar solos that defy technical logic, time signature changes that leave the mind reeling and melodic sensibilities that make this the must have metal album of the year.



CD \$13.88

ROADRUNNER

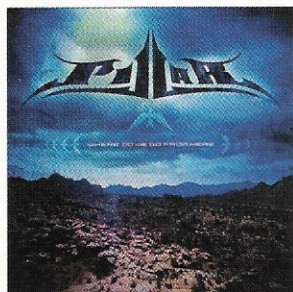
NIGHTWISH

Once

BIO: Nightwish—the name may be new to you, but throughout the rest of the world it ranks up there with Evanescence, U2 and Britney Spears in popularity. Hailing from Finland, Nightwish is the international phenomenon that held the #1 position on the Pan European charts for three weeks and has both a platinum selling album and single abroad. Roadrunner Records is proud to bring Nightwish to America.

Once, the band's fifth album, is a stunning combination of brawn and beauty; a seamless blend of technical

musicianship and soaring vocals, complemented by an orchestral backdrop (provided by the Academy of St. Martins in the Field, who scored *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy). The international #1 hit "Nemo" is a dreamy soundscape that crescendos and crashes with operatic precision—equal parts choral decadence and muscular heft.



CD \$9.99

CHORDANT

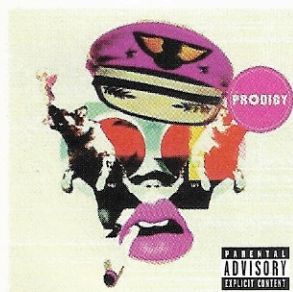
PILLAR

Where Do We Go From Here

BIO: Make no mistake about it, Pillar is not the rock 'n' roll of yesterday, but the forward moving revolution of today and tomorrow. Their zealous passion incinerates today's gimmicky knockoffs, leaving pretenders in a dust storm of reckless rock upheaval. The group's previous album, 2002's *Fireproof*, couldn't be held back, selling over 300,000 copies with unyielding momentum. Ready to roll into overdrive, Pillar returns with *Where Do We Go From Here*, a career album that meets the challenges of a band ready for primetime.

With each song, *Where Do We Go From Here* epitomizes

a selective musical approach in which only the best parts are kept for maximum impact. From "Hypnotized" to "Aftershock," the resulting songs burst with sweeping tempo shifts, relentless melodies, and a resolute, stand-tall attitude. Pillar, whose other albums include 2003's acoustic *Broken Down: The EP* and their 2001 debut *Above*, always writes empowering songs, yet the group sets itself apart by tackling subjects from a positive or spiritual perspective.



CD \$12.99

WARNER

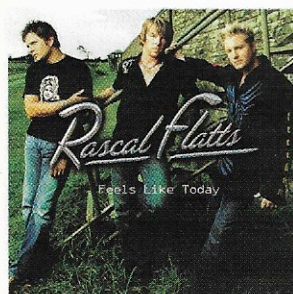
THE PRODIGY

Always Outnumbered, Never Outgunned

BIO: *Charly* was the record that propelled the Prodigy out of the underground rave scene and into the Top 3. No band has epitomized the relentless energy of rave culture better than Prodigy. The band quickly built a devoted fanbase with the rave scene and earned a reputation as the best buzz going. The band's No. 1 album *Music for the Jilted Generation* went gold within a week of its release and earned them critical praise as well as a nomination for the prestigious Mercury Music Prize. The band spent five years incessantly touring. Then, in March 1996, "Firestarter" entered the UK

charts at No. 1. It was the band's first No. 1 single, and it stayed at the top for three weeks.

Now the Prodigy are back in 2004 with *Always Outnumbered, Never Outgunned*, which is the sound of Liam Howlett reclaiming the Prodigy and putting the beats back in their rightful position—center stage. And the end result is an album that deserves to be the Prodigy's fourth album, back and fresh.



ON SALE NOW

HOLLYWOOD RECORDS

RASCAL FLATTS

Feels Like Today

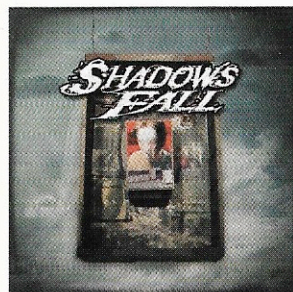
BIO: Multi-platinum selling country group Rascal Flatts is out now with their third album, *Feels Like Today*. The title track, the album's first single, has soared into the Top 20 after just a few short weeks.

Recorded in Nashville, Tennessee, Rascal Flatts team up with producers Mark Bright and Marty Williams for the third time on *Feels Like Today*.

"There is nothing more exciting than to be able to share new music with our fans," says lead singer Gary LeVox. "We had the luxury of time off the road this spring to begin

recording the album, so it was a refreshing and rejuvenating experience," says bassist Jay DeMarcus.

Rascal Flatts are the reigning Country Music Association, Academy of Country Music and ASCAP Vocal Group of the Year. They've enjoyed one of the fastest and most spectacular rises in recent country music history. No other country group has obtained this kind of status so quickly or had their second album go double platinum since the Dixie Chicks.



CD \$9.99

CENTURY MEDIA

SHADOWS FALL

The War Within

BIO: Shadows Fall unveils their most aggressive morsel to date while shattering the boundaries of traditional metal expectations. *The War Within* is a well-crafted opus challenging the hard rock community to embrace a record equally as revolutionary as the classic *Master of Puppets* was to Metallica's career. The five-piece stays true to their melodic edge while their musical proficiency and technical prowess show on tracks such as "The Light That Blinds," "Inspiration on Demand" and "The Power of I and I." It is the stunning

emotional epic tracks, however, that give their fourth album added depth and intensity on songs like "Ghosts of Past Failures" and "Stillness." *The War Within* continues to separate the group from their peers by showcasing their ability. Produced once again by Zeuss (Hatebreed, Sworn Enemy), *The War Within* shows Shadows Fall collectively taking a step forward and evolving as a unit.



CD \$9.99

STRAYLIGHT RUN

Straylight Run

BIO: Straylight Run started in May of 2003 when John Nolan and Shaun Cooper left Taking Back Sunday. With a few songs already written they began recording some demos before they had solidified their lineup. After Breaking Panagaea split they invited its drummer Will Noon to practice with them and soon he was a permanent part of the band. A short while after that, the band's lineup was complete when John's sister Michelle was asked to play piano and guitar for the band. After a summer of practice and preparation, Straylight Run played its first show to a sold-out crowd at the

Down Town in Farmingdale, New York on September seventh. Their first show kicked off a short tour of the northeastern United States which was soon followed by a co-headlining cross country tour with the New Amsterdams. In only a short time they have amassed a tremendous and dedicated following.



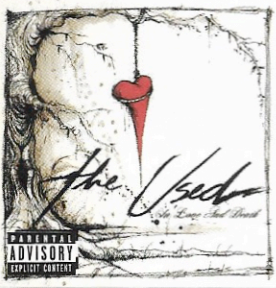
2 CDs \$15.95

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Ultra Trance: 4

BIO: Disc One: Paul Van Dyk – "Connected (Motomix 05)," Angel City – "Touch Me (Rank 1 Remix)," Plumm – "Cherish the Day (Antillas Remix)," O-Zone – "Dragostea Din Tei (Almighty Remix)," Hard in Tango – "This Is My DJ," Jordan James – "Livin' on a Prayer," Motorcycle – "As the Rush Comes (Armin van Buuren Universal Religion Remix)," 4 Strings – "Turn It Around (Extended mix)," Above and Beyond – "No One on Earth (Gabriel and Dresden Remix)," Andain – Beautiful Things (Gabriel & Dresden Unplugged Radio Edit)," Ferry Corsten – "It's Time (Extended Mix),"

Double Nation – "I'm Gonna Get You (extended vocal mix)" Disc Two: Deepsky – "Talk Like a Stranger (original)," Tiesto – "Obsession," Age of Love – "Age of Love (Marco V Remix)," Armin Van Buuren – "Blue Fear 2004 (Solid Globe Remix)," Randy Katana – "One Solid Wave," Jas Van Houten – "Loco Love," Kane – "Rain Down on Me (Tiesto Remix edit)," White Room – "White Room," Interstate – "I Found U," Dave Seaman presents Group Therapy – "My Own Worst Enemy," Jon Con vs. Nikola Gala feat. Perasma – "Swing 2 Harmony," D:Fuse – "Living the Dream (Extended mix)"



CD ON SALE NOW

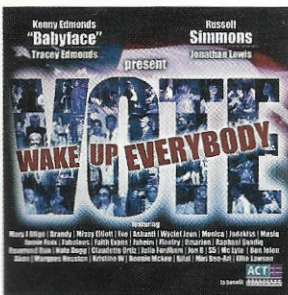
THE USED

In Love and Death

BIO: First album? Gold. CD+DVD? Gold. Since the release of its critically acclaimed self-titled debut in mid-2002, the Used has quickly become a musical powerhouse. Now, with *In Love and Death*, the band's second album, the Used has truly found its voice—honest, uncompromising, loud and strong.

Tracks:
Take It Away
I Caught Fire
Let It Bleed

All That I've Got
Cut Up Angels
Listening
Yesterday's Feelings
Light With a Sharpened Edge
Sound Effects and Overdramatics
Hard to Say
Lunacy Fringe
I'm a Fake



CD \$13.88

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Wake Up Everybody

BIO: As the 2004 election draws nearer and nearer, the amount of support from artists to encourage younger people to vote draws more and more attention. *Wake Up Everybody* is nothing short of a milestone in music history with production by Babyface and an artist roster to top the MTV Awards. *Wake Up Everybody* contains a full 50-minute bonus DVD entailing behind the scenes footage from the recording studio.

Wake Up Everybody features a wide variety of today's hottest hip-hop, R&B and rap stars. Among the standout performances are Missy Elliott, Jamie Foxx, Jadakiss,

Fabulous, Jaheim, Faith Evans, Claudette Ortiz (City High) and Nate Dogg, with Floetry, Ben Jelen, Bilal, Akon, Bonnie McKee, DJ Quik, Ellie Lawson, Jon B, Julia Fordham, Kristine Q., Marques Houston, MC Lyte, Omarion (B2K), Raphael Saadiq, S5 and Wyclef Jean providing backup vocals for the chorus.



CD \$8.99

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Who's America?

BIO: *Who's America?*, a collaborative compilation born of some of electronic music and hip-hop's finest coming together to raise civic awareness and draw attention to the upcoming Presidential election, perhaps the most important one in decades. System and Definitive Jux have contributed exclusive new tracks in addition to some well known classics, in the attempt to highlight the powerful platform our culture and community can be when brought into sharp focus and how ownership of the principles that support this nation

leads directly to the ownership of power itself. *Who's America?* is meant to inform, encourage and challenge a demographic made apathetic by manipulative and self-serving powers that be. Worse, this apathy is rapidly giving way to antipathy amongst those who feel their views are not considered nor their voices heard, and that their government acts not as an extension of the people's will, but by an agenda all its own.



CD \$13.88



ANITA BAKER

My Everything

BIO: In the span of a decade, Anita Baker has sold more than 13 million records. She is also an eight-time Grammy Award winner whose live concerts are glorious presentations of R&B, pop and jazz. Her broad musical appeal has inspired collaborations with Luciano Pavarotti, Frank Sinatra as well as a request to duet with Luther Vandross. It's the wide scope of Anita Baker's appeal that catapulted her 1988 *Giving You the Best That I Got* album to double platinum in less than eight weeks, and which kept 1987's *Rapture* and 1994's *Rhythm of Love* on the charts for three years.

Anita's Blue Note Records debut *My Everything* is just that—a collection of the best attributes of Anita Baker—singer, songwriter, producer—wrapped in a lush package of ten brilliant songs. Her offerings are not just aural pleasure. Something about her music is visceral and tactile and you don't just hear it, you feel it, you visit it and it washes over you.



CD \$13.88



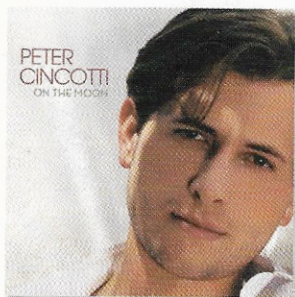
KASEY CHAMBERS

Wayward Angel

BIO: Kasey Chambers' third solo album, *Wayward Angel*, debuted #1 in her native Australia, where she is a huge star. In the US she has built a solid fanbase thanks to touring, critical acclaim and word of mouth. Partly born of tradition, partly of the times, more than a little country but with a healthy dose of rock 'n' roll. *Wayward Angel* is a singer-songwriter album for those who find their musical heaven off the beaten path.

2002's *Barricades & Brickwalls* scanned 130,000-plus copies and charted Top 20 Country US. Back home Chambers

became the first Australian country artist to simultaneously claim the #1 pop single ("Not Pretty Enough") and #1 pop album (quadruple platinum there). In 2000, *The Captain* (Top 50 Country US) was double platinum in Oz and here made *Rolling Stone's* "Top 50 Recordings of the Year."



CD \$13.88



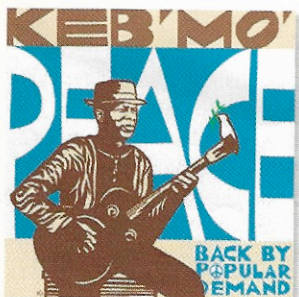
PETER CINCOTTI

On the Moon

BIO: Take a trip to the Moon with Peter Cincotti. Concord Records is proud to present the highly anticipated second CD from the 21-year-old pop/jazz singer and pianist Peter Cincotti. Reunited with Grammy winner Phil Ramone, who produced Cincotti's chart topping debut album, the singer and pianist puts a contemporary unique and undeniably infectious twist on such classic pop and jazz standards as "I Love Paris," "St. Louis Blues" and "Some Kind of Wonderful." Cincotti also demonstrates his talents as composer and arranger on this album. Whether it is on one of

his own compositions such as "On the Moon" or the fresh and original spin he gives to Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Bali Ha'i," Peter's distinct musical voice resonates throughout this recording.

"The only thing you can say about Peter Cincotti is that he's sensational." — Howard Kissel, *NY Daily News*



CD \$13.88



KEB' MO'

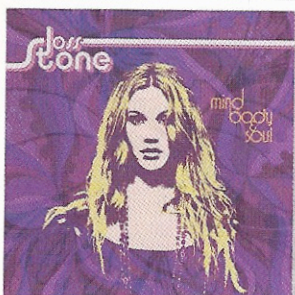
Peace... Back by Popular Demand

BIO: "My intention for this record is to be meaningful and relevant to what I am feeling in our own time," says Keb' Mo'. "It started out as a collection of protest songs, but it evolved into an album about peace and freedom."

Keb' Mo' is talking about his new album, *Peace... Back by Popular Demand*. On this new collection, Keb' Mo' takes on nine classic message songs of the sixties and seventies and adds a stirring new composition of his own. Tracks include "Imagine" (John Lennon), "People Got to Be Free" (The Rascals), "What's Happening, Brother?" (Marvin Gaye), "For

What It's Worth" (Buffalo Springfield), "Someday We'll All Be Free" (Donny Hathaway), "The Times They Are A-Changing" (Bob Dylan) and more.

"If my music can cast even a shadow of peace and understanding on humanity," says Keb' Mo', "well... that will be pretty cool!"



CD \$12.99

S-CURVE

JOSS STONE

Mind, Body & Soul

BIO: "For me, personally, *Mind, Body and Soul* is my real debut."

Joss Stone's words may come as a surprise to fans of the seventeen-year-old singer from Devon, England: her first S-Curve recording, *The Soul Sessions*, established Stone as perhaps the most gifted vocalist of her generation. But that September 2003 release, Joss admits, "started out as a side project and turned into this huge thing."

"I didn't mean it to," she adds with a cheerfully self-

deprecating laugh, "but people just kept buying it." By the summer of 2004, *The Soul Sessions* was certified gold in the US and had sold more than two million copies worldwide.

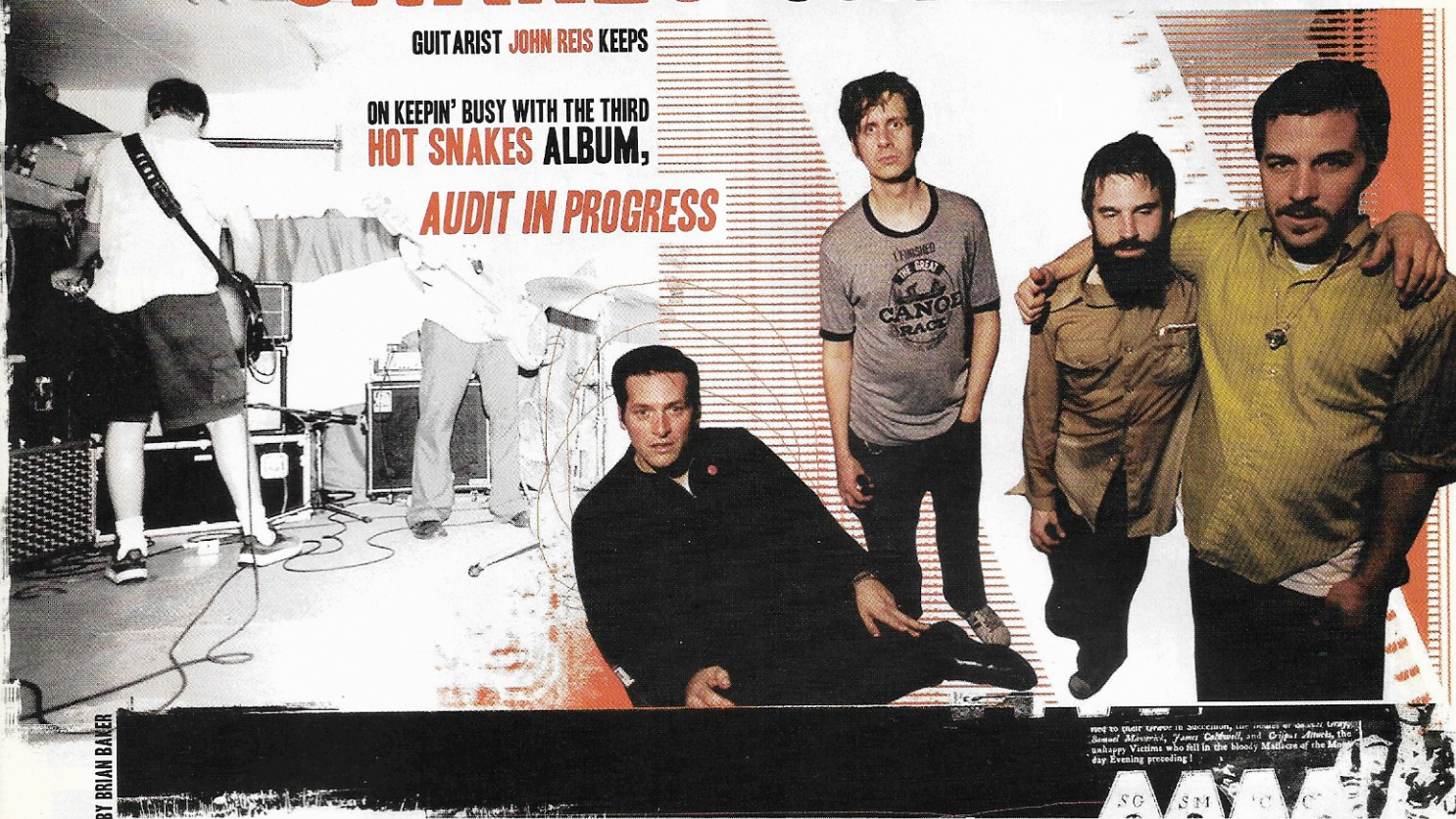
Listen to the dynamic and assured performances that comprise *Mind, Body and Soul*—from the feverish first single "You Had Me" to the playful dance track "Don't Cha Wanna Ride" to the impassioned rock-soul ballad "Killing Time." Joss has a voice of uncommon strength, soulfulness and sensitivity.

SNAKES CHARMER

GUITARIST JOHN REIS KEEPS

ON KEEPIN' BUSY WITH THE THIRD
HOT SNAKES ALBUM,

AUDIT IN PROGRESS



BY BRIAN BAKER

TO SAY JOHN REIS KEEPS A BUSY SCHEDULE IS LIKE SAYING DONALD TRUMP HAS A FEW REAL ESTATE HOLDINGS. From his

San Diego base, Reis owns and operates Swami Records, the repository for all of his new and ongoing musical projects, from his longest standing gig with Rocket From the Crypt to his latest punk project, the Sultans, to Hot Snakes, his five year old collaboration with Rick Froberg and Gar Wood.

Creating, executing and administering the work of just one band is a daunting enough task, but Reis routinely accomplishes the same feat for three distinct musical directions, the latest being the third Hot Snakes album, *Audit in Progress*. What would seem overwhelming to most is just another day in Reis' tightly compacted universe.

"I don't really worry about it," says Reis with measured nonchalance. "I think playing with different people defines the sound. Playing with Hot Snakes, and even Drive Like Jehu and Pitchfork before that, came about just trying to find a voice for those songs. Collaborating with Rick helped bring a voice to that music, one that I couldn't do myself. Plus he added so much more, not only his guitar playing but visual aspects and lyrically as well. For all the bands I've been in with Rick, it's the collaboration between the two of us, and whoever else

is involved as well, which keeps that sound separate from Rocket From the Crypt."

One interesting angle about Reis' creative schizophrenia is how he compartmentalizes his work for each distinct entity. Admittedly, there's some common ground between the horn-fueled punk of RFTC, the stripped down hotrod punk of the Sultans and the elemental thrash of Hot Snakes, but Reis discerns the subtleties across bands and albums.

"I guess there have been times when I write a song and I'll go, 'Oh, that's a Rockets song' or 'That's a Hot Snakes song,'" says Reis. "But usually the songs come in clumps; I don't know if that's a musical term. Like with this new Hot Snakes record, all the songs came within a three or four month period. I wasn't really writing songs or thinking about anything else, just Hot Snakes, and focusing on that and letting that squirm in my head."

Another fascinating component of Reis' musical multi-tasking is in the area of creative evolution. Most bands mutate along


a path dictated by membership, experience and influence. But though that process is slightly complicated in Reis' case, he recognizes a clear growth pattern from the Hot Snakes' debut five years ago to *Audit in Progress*.

"It's pretty obvious, too," says Reis. "The first record was banged out between myself and [original] drummer Jason Kourkounis. Then I was at that crossroads where I tried to put words and voice to my music and it didn't gel. I have limitations, and when you hear something in your head and you're not able to do it, you think, 'Well, I need to get someone else.' Rick was the first person I thought of. He elevates the ideas."

And the Snakes continue to grow. For *Audit in Progress*, RFTC drummer Mario Rubalcaba came on board. "And that's kind of the evolution right there," says Reis. "From two people going in and belting it out, to this record where it was very much the four of us—with Mario on drums now—spending more time writing and recording. One thing you figure out early on is just because you spend more time on something doesn't mean it's gonna be better. The best songs are sometimes the ones you write in one minute."

RUPAUL

IS RED HOT!!!





RUPAUL RED HOT
CD \$11.97


BILLBOARD DANCE CHART! AND #1 DEBUT ITUNES DANCE SINGLE!
September 21st marks the much-anticipated return of RuPaul to the world stage with the release of the sizzling new CD entitled *RuPaul Red Hot*. The CD is a collection of new dance songs that are guaranteed to set the dance floor ablaze and ignite passion in the soul.

Joe Nardone's
Gallery Of Sound

On Sale Now at All 11 Locations.
Sale Ends 10.31.04





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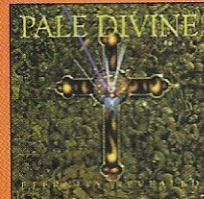


LILITU
DELORES LESION
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Joe Nardone's
Gallery Of Sound



HEATHEN
RECOVERED
CD \$11.97

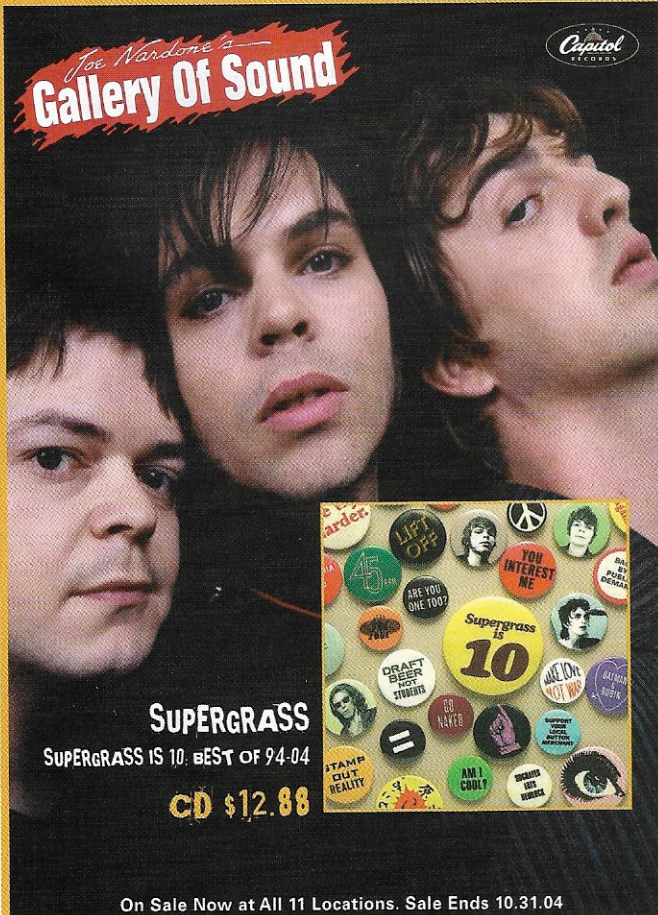


PALE DIVINE
ETERNITY REVEALED
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THE END
RECORDS

Joe Nardone's
Gallery Of Sound



SUPERGRASS
SUPERGRASS IS 10. BEST OF 94-04
CD \$12.88

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ATO
Records

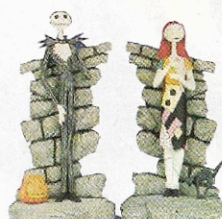


GOVT MULE
DEJA VOODOO
CD \$12.88

Joe Nardone's
Gallery Of Sound

On Sale Now at All 11 Locations. Sale Ends 10.31.04

If I followed some of the local trends I could mention that we are having a "spooktacular" sale this October. Five seconds or less.... Correct answer is NO! The only thing scary about a sale like that is



EYE CANDY

Imports, Movies, Pop Merchandise, Edible Goods, Accessories, Collectibles, Sheet Music, Clothing. *by Ren Beck*



that people are thinking that spooktacular is a word. Fair enough, it is October and it's a great time of year to get ugly or pretty depending on which team you're on. And what a better time of year than to mention the first of two waves of new Nightmare before Christmas 2004 Merchandise. From NECA, here are some of the many unique items that are currently in stock. You can always count on the quality but never the quantity of all the NMBC products; it's highly collectable and short in supply. Jack or Sally Inflatable Figures, The many Faces Of Jack (wall hangings), Jack & Sally heart Ornament, 2004 Wine Glass Set, Wall Scroll, NMBC Board Game, Jack Pewter Candelabra and the Jack & Sally Bookends. These are just a few items from the first wave. In November, we'll tell you more about the second wave.



visual

Recent arrivals include Scooby Doo 2, The Punisher, Man on Fire, Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind, Soul Plane, Latter Days and Jersey Girl.

coming soon

The Day After Tomorrow, 10/5	White Chicks, 10/26
Van Helsing, 10/19	Shrek 2, 11/5
Betty Blue, 10/12	Spider-Man 2, 11/30
Fahrenheit 9/11, 10/5	The Bourne Supremacy, 12/7
	Catwoman, 12/7

pop life

Since we are only a few months away from the snow and the holidays you might consider grabbing one of the 20-inch Leg Lamps, reproduced one last time from the holiday classic film *A Christmas Story*. By December 31, 2004 they will no longer be available so don't wait! Other recent arrivals include The Crow "Reflection Action Figure 2pk," the garbage Pail Kids Trading Cards Series 3, from Palisades the entire collection of the Ren & Stimpy action figures, Ghostbusters action figures, a cool scented collection of air fresheners from our friends at Blue Q (from rude to radical and sure to open a few eyes) and a great new selection of holiday gift wrap!



Here's a sample of what we're serving this month...

Philips "Jogproof" Portable CD player w/headphones \$31.99
 TDK CDR 80 Music 20pk w/slim jewel case \$16.95
 TDK CDR 80 Data 20 spindle \$10.99
 TDK CDR 80 Data 100 spindle \$49.99
 TDK CDR 80 Data 50 spindle w/American flag imprint \$27.99

HOT PLATE SPECIAL:

Maxell UR90 Single .99
 Maxell UDII Single .99
 Sony T-120 4pk \$7.99
 Samsung AA 4pk Alkaline \$1.49
 TDK D60 5pk \$4.99
 TDK D60 10pk \$9.99
 TDK D90 6pk \$5.99



FOLK-PUNK WORDSMITH **KIMYA DAWSON** TAKES HER SOLO ACT ON THE ROAD

BY J POET

KIMYA DAWSON HAS A NEW OCCUPATION: WANDERING MINSTREL.

Scattering tunelets across the American landscape for anyone to hear, the reigning anti-folk queen has become a free-range troubadour.

"If I had to pay rent I might have a hard time," Dawson says from Denver, where she's taking a break from her current cross-country trip to baby-sit a newborn nephew. "But I can sustain myself on the road, and that's all I want to do till I'm 85. I can't imagine having much more fun than I do now, fitting everything into a minivan, driving cross-country, singing my songs and staying with people I like."

Dawson and Adam Green formed the Moldy Peaches in New York City at the turn of the century. Over rudimentary folk-punk, the duo sang simple lyrics that often sounded like dirty nursery rhymes; Rough Trade released the Peaches' self-titled debut album and "Who's Got the Crack?" became an indie hit in England. But after a whirlwind European tour it became obvious

that the Moldy Peach logo couldn't contain the restless, prolific spirits of Green and Dawson. The Peaches are now on extended hiatus, allowing Dawson the time to record and promote *Hidden Vagenda*, her first set for Olympia, Washington's proudly lo-fi K Records.

"This is my fourth solo album," says Dawson. "Rough Trade just couldn't put 'em out as fast as I make 'em. So when I was done with this one I e-mailed [K label head] Calvin [Johnson] and asked if he'd do it for me. I didn't want to worry about signing contracts and all the music business stuff, plus K has built up a network of places I can play in without having to go through a booker."

Hidden Vagenda is the most musically thought through of Dawson's solo projects. She's supported by folks like Stephan Jenkins of Third Eye Blind, the French Americana band Herman Düne, and Joe Gore, guitarist of choice for P. J. Harvey and Tom Waits, each of whom polishes Dawson's unique circular melodies without overwhelming them. The help is appreci-

ated, because Dawson is a primitive musician—as she'll be the first to admit. "The other day I was asking a friend how many more songs I could write using C G and D chords, or A E and D," she says, "but a lot of Dylan and Guthrie songs sound like the same music with different words."

And it's the words that make Dawson's work. Verbal torrents, adjectival tidal waves, truckloads of similes and metaphors tumbling and cascading out of her mouth faster than your ears can absorb them, her sing-song voice at once childish and world weary, and her hyperactive poetry addresses realities as harsh as death and as complex as living at Ground Zero after 9/11, but Dawson manages to shed light on even the darkest subjects. After all, as she sings on "My Heroes," "Having been f***ed is no excuse for being f***ed up"

"I like getting into the rhythms of words," says Dawson. "Maybe it's an unconscious influence from listening to rap; I love the Beastie Boys, De La Soul and the Roots, the way they can spin out those half funny, half serious story rambles." ❖

GROWN UP ALL WRONG

Green Day dive into the world of political alienation with *American Idiot*



By Gary Graff

IN THE FOUR YEARS SINCE GREEN DAY RELEASED

its last studio album, **Warning**, the group has released a pair of compilations—the singles-oriented **International Superhits!** and the vault-mining **Shenanigans**. You'd think the Bay Area punk trio was clearing its slate.

You'd be right.

"They let us pull the tablecloth out from everything we've made and set a new table," explains bassist Mike Dirnt. "We're ready to stomp new ground and that kind of thing."

Which brings us to *American Idiot*, Green Day's eighth album and the boldest, most ambitious set that Dirnt, guitarist Billie Joe Armstrong and drummer Tre Cool have yet delivered. It retains the snotty energy that turned the trio into multi-platinum icons with 1994's *Dookie*. At the same time, however, Green Day bravely stride into the realm of concept albums with *American Idiot*, a disc based loosely on the central character's (surprise!) alienation and disaffection from society and containing not one but two multi-part song suites: "Jesus of Suburbia" and "Homecoming."

Somewhere, Pete Townshend is smiling—and so is Green Day, who make no apologies for letting punk rock grow up a bit.

"My philosophy on it is you don't establish a set of rules on top of yourself," Armstrong explains. "You do what you want and just be an individual rather than playing just songs that sound like the

Ramones or something. I think there's a lot of clichés that pop up; if we were to put out the same record again and again, I think we'd get really bored."

Adds Dirnt, "We love what we do, and we work very hard at that. A lot of people don't seem to understand it. Maybe other bands get big and rest on their laurels or don't still get together in a small room and practice. For us, that's fun."

In fact, Dirnt adds, it's Green Day's creative philosophy, even more than thrashing guitars and pummeling rhythms, that embodies the punk ethos.

"Man, most people who would label us 'punk' have no clue whatsoever what punk is," says the bassist. "In a nutshell, punk to us is something that has a set of ethics, that stands for or against something. It really means no rules, going against the grain sometimes."

"It's a lifestyle thing, too, punk rock. It's just something that's me; it's the music I like—not the only music I like—and the kind of point of view you live with and see things through. But I never thought of punk rock being my uniform; I always thought of it as just kind of a cool thing that I was into

that didn't not include other people."

Armstrong, meanwhile, says that having a life is what allowed Green Day the creative head space to continue looking beyond the well-trodden path of "Basket Case" and "Longview"—which scores of Warped Tour groups are perfectly happy to continue replicating.

"The main thing we did," Armstrong contends, "the most important thing that we did or that I did to set up for writing this record—was to stop playing music for awhile. We just kind of stopped and re-evaluated and hung out with friends and family, to have a life to write about again."

"I think I just sort of waited for inspirational moments for when I felt like a song was good."

Green Day wound up with plenty of material for *American Idiot*; the suites came from a band exercise in which it linked together 30-second songs blasts they each came up with. But there's no question that the creative adventure affected the album's other 11 songs—and, if Green Day's members have their way, will even further impact the music that's to come.

"What we've done always influences what we're going to do," Dirnt notes. "We're not running back to our roots, and we're not running from where we've gotten to. I think we're just forging new ground with all the influences we've always had."

"Punk rock is supposed to mean no rules, right? So don't try to tell us that we're supposed to sound like anything." ♦



THE GRAE ALBUM

WITH *THIS WEEK*, JEAN GRAE SOLIDIFIES

HER POSITION AS ONE OF HIP-HOP'S FINEST

It takes nerve to be a rapper, and New York MC Jean Grae

has plenty to spare—as anyone who's heard 2002's *Attack of the Attack-ing Things* or last year's *Bootleg of the Bootleg* EP is aware. Grae's snappy style ("Gnash your teeth, smash you, then bind your feet/ Thrash holes in your dome, snatch your soul and retreat/ Mad Maxess, the pro so dope it's fantastic/ Now fold up your dough before you get your ass kicked," she spits on *Bootleg's* "Haters Anthem") is no less self-possessed than her displays of vulnerability (see *Bootleg's* "Take Me," or *Attack's* "What Would I Do"), and she integrates both to create one of the most well-rounded personas in rap. The new *This Week* [Babygrande] is equally bold, thanks in part to production from 9th Wonder and Midi Mafia, and mostly to Grae's ever-increasing assurance on the mic.

Born Tsidi Ibrahim to musician parents (her father was Abdullah Ibrahim, the great South African pianist), Grae began writing early. "My mom used to be a

schoolteacher, so she taught us to read when we were about two or three. So I always had a love for the language and a love for words. A lot of the times, the only way she could really shut us up was to put a book in front of us. Which led to me being like, 'I want to be able to create the kind of stuff that I'm reading.' I was a kid who would cut all my other classes and go play spades, or cut school, but I would always try to make it to English classes."

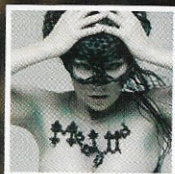
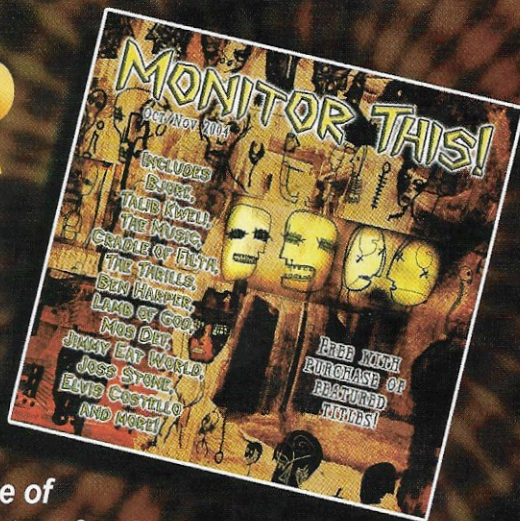
As a young reader, Grae's tastes were wide-ranging. "The first long book I read as a child that I remember—my mom gave it to me—was *Little Women*," she says. "I was five or six. The first book I remember reading on my own was *The Covenant*, by James Michener. I was always [writing] crap little stories when I was four or five. You don't really know much about anything else, so you write about unicorns. It gave me a freedom I didn't feel I had in anything else. You could say whatever you wanted; you could take someone into your own world, you could create a world that didn't exist. [By junior high], I would look forward to reports and essays. I knew I'd get 'em done real fast, so I would always wait till the last night and come out with a crazy, long-assed report that no one else had."

Grae started rhyming to herself around age 13; she was "forced" to rap for other people at 15, she says with a laugh. "A good friend talked me into it. Having one person who believes in you and is like, 'Oh, you've got some s***.' It was the writing aspect that drew me to it, like, 'Wow, you can write for a living?'"

"My mother would have me go to piano lessons when I was four. It's New York—you want to try and keep your kids as busy as possible. It works up until a certain age. I wish I had taken piano lessons further than I took them. You don't want to practice; you don't want to be cooped up in the room. In retrospect, me playing piano onstage right now would have been sick." ❖

BY MICHAELANGELO MATOS

MONITOR THIS!



1 BJORK
komid
(previously unreleased
track not found
on the Elektra CD
Medulla)

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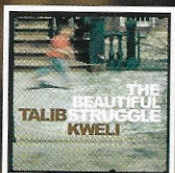
2 JOSEPH ARTHUR
can't exist
(from the Vector CD
Our Shadows Will Remain)



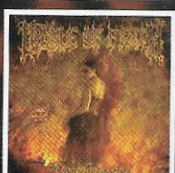
9 PAPA ROACH
scars
(from the Dreamworks/
Geffen CD
Getting Away With Murder)



16 ELVIS COSTELLO
monkey to man
(from the Lost
Highway CD
The Delivery Man)



3 TALIB KWELI
back up off me
(from the Rawkus CD
Beautiful Struggle)



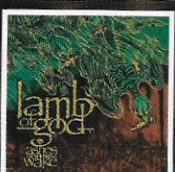
10 CRADLE OF FILTH
nymphetamine
(from the Roadrunner CD
Nymphetamine)



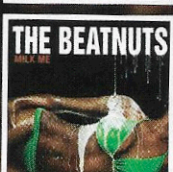
17 CITIZEN COPE
bullet and a target
(from the RCA CD
The Clarence Greenwood Recordings)



4 MEDESKI, MARTIN & WOOD
reflector
(from the Blue Note CD
End of the World Party (Just In Case))



11 LAMB OF GOD
laid to rest
(from the Epic CD
Ashes of the Wake)



18 THE BEATNUTS
(FEATURING AKON)
find us (in the back
of the club)
(from the Rykodisc/Penalty CD
Milk Me)



5 DOGS DIE IN HOT CARS
i love you 'cause i
have to
(from the V2 album
Please Describe Yourself)



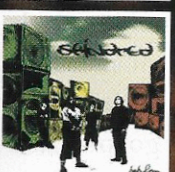
12 MOS DEF
ghetto rock
(from the
GoodTree/Geffen CD
The New Danger)



19 JOSS STONE
you had me
(from the S-Curve CD
Mind, Body & Soul)



6 BEN HARPER
WITH THE BLIND
BOYS OF ALABAMA
well, well, well
(from the Virgin CD
There Will Be A Light)



13 SKINDRED
nobody
(from the Lava CD
Babylon)



20 THE THRILLS
not for all the love in
the world
(from the Virgin CD
Let's Bottle Bohemia)



7 THE MUSIC
freedom fighters
(from the Capitol CD
Welcome to the North)



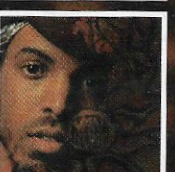
14 THE EXPLOSION
here i am
(from the Virgin CD
Black Tape)



21 RINGSIDE
spanishfaster
(from the Flawless/
Geffen CD
Ringside)

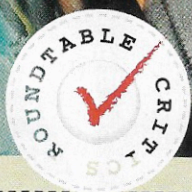


8 JIMMY EAT WORLD
pain
(from the
Interscope CD
Futures)



15 VAN HUNT
down here in hell
(with you)
(from the Capitol CD
Van Hunt)

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JUDGMENT DAY

THREE CRITICS STEP TO THE
CHALLENGE OF R.KELLY'S NEW TWO-DISC
SET *Happy People/U Saved Me*

R. KELLY HAS ALWAYS BEEN both playfully sensual and intensely committed, but never has he so carefully compartmentalized these two sides of his music as on the new double-disc set, *Happy People/U Saved Me*. The first disc is a collection of blithe uptempo cuts custom-designed for the dance style known as stepping; the other is straight gospel. And now, three of the nation's finest Kellyologists—**JOHN DARNIELLE**, **DYLAN HICKS** AND **JULIANNE SHEPHERD**—will seek to justify the ways of this superstar to intrigued laypeople. And maybe do a little preachin' to the choir on the side.

From: John Darnielle
To: Dylan Hicks, Julianne Shepherd
Re: Saved

Hi all-

I have to say that when I saw *Happy People/U Saved Me* was a double-CD instead of two separate albums, I was kind of disappointed. With *Use Your Illusions I & II*, Guns N' Roses made it pretty clear that they'd wanted to release a double-album without having to come completely clean about it. But two different records by the same artist showcasing two different aspects of his work, released on the same day? Unless, like me, you become a helpless junkie deep in the grip of his addiction as soon as you walk into a record store, you might've had to take sides.

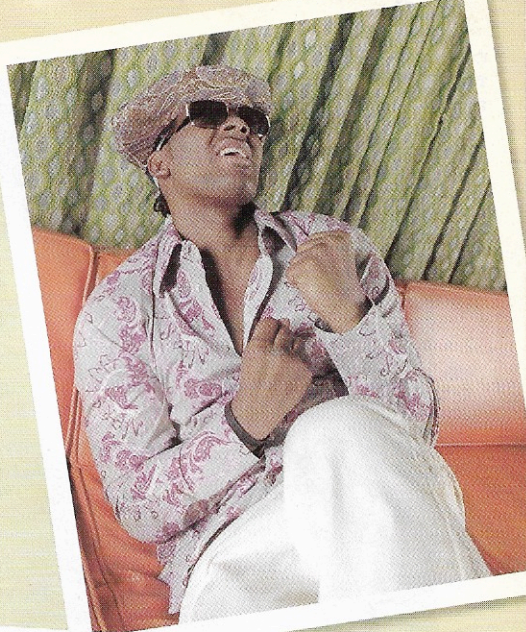
I wouldn't want to take sides between the inspirational R. Kelly & the smooth high-stepping nonstop-afterparty R. Kelly; my favorite track on the abysmally titled *TP-2.com* was "I Wish (To All the Homies That We Lost Remix)," from which I learned that R. Kelly had the ability to reduce me to a crying, slobbering mess. And I think the effect of letting "I Wish" share breathing room with the ridiculous & sublime "Feeling On Yo' Booty" is an increase in the former's pathos, not a diminishing.

So I took the *Happy People/U Saved Me* double-CD as an attempt to get the goth kids to leave the cheerleaders alone - to stop or control the dialogue between the inspirational songs and the (presumably less "serious") dance numbers. But I don't think that's what really happens at all. On first listen, *Happy People* sounds light & airy & carefree and *U Saved Me* comes off heavy-handed. After living with the albums for a week and a half though I've started to hear something wistful & forlorn in *Happy People*, and something deeply pop in the aggressively Christian *U Saved Me*. As has often been the case with R. Kelly - it's kind of the whole point of his work - sheen gives way to depth. I think what he's responding to here is a blurring of borders between secular and religious, and addressing music's role in that blurring, and doing so at a very personal level sometimes, and I'm quite taken with the whole thing.

Of course, the less said about that line about taking God's name off the currency, the better. But I am protective of people whose work I love. A couple of quick introductory notes, intentionally left 'til the end: I'm not a Christian & react as I suspect most critics do to overt Christianity in pop music, i.e. with deep suspicion. But I don't think the facile albeit popular reading of *U Saved Me*, i.e. as an attempt to sway public opinion in the wake of the well-publicized home porn tapes, holds much water.

"Heaven, I Need a Hug," now, that's a different story.

All best from North Carolina,
John



From: Dylan Hicks
To: John Darnielle, Julianne Shepherd
Re: Shot of Love

My fellow parishioners,

There are, of course, compelling empirical and moral reasons to be skeptical of R. Kelly's intentions, but I agree with you, John, that *Happy People/U Saved Me* isn't a public-relations move. The success of the great and largely decadent *Chocolate Factory* suggests that the public isn't terribly troubled by Kelly's character as long as his music is tight. (He really should lose the "Pied Piper" epithet, though.)

Using the frequently gorgeous and affecting *Happy/U* as my only evidence, I'm convinced that Kelly's conversion is sincere. Maybe this is another way of saying that his performance is convincing. Or maybe this is another way of saying that what we call soul is a different word for God, and that R. Kelly has a lot of soul. I say this as a preacher's kid whose religious beliefs are apparently closer to those of John Darnielle than to those of John Ashcroft, who presumably would be pleased with this album's lack of dirty words and rapping but vexed by its recurrent anti-war messages.

On a related note, one might also read the lyrics "We're so quick to say 'God Bless America' / But take away 'In God We Trust' / What the hell is wrong with us?" as an endorsement of humble faith and universalism over nationalistic theism. In fact, I'd argue that this album's blurring of the secular and the spiritual is less in tune with current cultural and political trends than with the great R&B tradition of Bible-reading voluptuaries. I suppose it's also in the tradition of most of human history. Speaking of the great R&B tradition, I wish that Kelly's nods to Marvin Gaye, Maze, Stevie Wonder, and Prince weren't so imitative - some of these virtuosos near-reproductions have a Rutles/Dukes of Stratosphere quality. He's found a way to take vocal tricks from Sam Cooke and make them his own; I hope this pattern continues.

Two last things: (1) "Spirit" is the only one of these 21 songs that I know I will skip over each time, and (2) The confidently restrained Donnie Lyle, more and more Kelly's aide-de-camp, might be the finest session bassist and guitarist working today.

Steppin' to the a.m.,
Dylan

From: Julianne Shepherd
To: John Darnielle, Dylan Hicks
Re: Angels in America

Hello, My Steppin' Peoples.

R's Stevie Wonder steez goes way beyond the deep-vibing vocal burrs: the album artwork, even down to the font, is a throwback to *Innervisions*. It's blatant enough to make me think he's a savvy historian than mimic (albeit one with a healthy ego).

I like what you're wielding, John, about the blurring, but I don't think these discs are actually two separate beings. What we're dealing with here, sirs, is a binary fantasia, a utopia in the club (or on "123 LOVE" FM) found after salvation, dystopian deliverance up to heaven-on-earth. (Obviously this works better if you listen to the album backwards, with the gospel part first and the melted-caramel dance stuff second.) To quote my co-worker Yancey quoting the Talking Heads, "The band in heaven plays my favorite song/ They play it once again, they play it all night long." On *Happy People's* glimmering crests, stepping is not only a viable substitute for therapy, but has the power to eradicate war ("Love Signals"). Clearly, this is R's interpretation of paradise. And after witnessing the "Happy People" video's soft-focus lighting, gold-balloon confetti and champagne-abundant dance party, I'm not convinced he's wrong.

As for godly music, I have no beef with the Holy Spirit, I only take it personally if it's trying to inhabit my body. (We've reached consensus with the *U Saved Me*-as-not-a-PR-move question; I'm guessing the only fan R feels he's gotta answer to is the Great Stepper on High.) My problem is with his personal narrative—the alleged penchant for terribly young girls — and the fact that I, apparently unlike most people, cannot extricate its creepy subtext from his music. (Especially on "Greatest Show on Earth," the bombastic rubdown in which he, incredibly, likens his bedroom to a circus big-top.)

Still, "Love Street" is my jam,
Julianne

From: Dylan Hicks
To: John Darnielle, Julianne Shepherd
Re: Hello Lovers of Love

To these ears, the gospel album is deeper but more uneven than the step album. Kelly peaked as a songwriter with the moody thin-line-between-love-and-hate slow jams on R. and *Sparkle's* contemporaneous "Be Careful." Yet these last two (or three) Kelly albums are my favorite because he's gotten even better as a singer and producer and has reduced his output of skip tracks. Much of this album, especially *Happy People*, is unmistakably the work of a diligent natural with his own studio. Kelly's earlier material generally sounded like piano tunes transferred to the studio, but most of the step-dance numbers seem to have been composed on the fly, presumably by screwing around for hours or days until the right groove comes along and then layering on ad libbed hooks for maximum elegance.

Many of my favorite moments on *Happy/U* are those seemingly serendipitous extras: the descending vocal harmonies that close "Ladies' Night (Treat Her Like Heaven)"; those "whoas" on and around the downbeats of "How Did You Manage"; the leaky-faucet snare drum on the verses to "Diary of Me" (an otherwise problematic tune — for starters, I think the standard English construction is "My Diary"). Strictly in terms of songwriting, I'm most impressed with "3-Way Phone Call," the best transcription of a phone conversation into music since Chuck Berry's "Memphis." And though I initially thought Kelly was overreaching on the U2-meets-Sounds of Blackness "Peace," I've now entirely surrendered to it, the ending in particular. I still suspect that Kelly is closer to a monstrous talent than a certified genius. But no other artist since Bill Clinton was first elected has given me as much pleasure.

You make a right on L,
Dylan

From: John Darnielle
To: Dylan Hicks, Julianne Shepherd
Re: Calculus, Oh My God

What's remarkable to me is how effectively Kelly deploys what I'd usually consider a pretty cheap Christian trick: the "God changed my life" gambit. Take "Prayer Changes." Reasonably speaking, all lives will have their ups and downs; pray regularly and you can put it on God when things happen to turn your way. But when Kelly completely inhabits a character, there's an unspeakable and convincing elegance in it, something very near total communication with the listener. And so the young athlete whose coach has threatened to cut him from the team if he can't get his grades up, sings: "Man, as tough as I was, I break down and cry/ 'Cause everybody knows me knows that basketball is my life."

Loss! It looms hungrily here, awaiting its defeat at the hands of a praying believer; but it's mere vapor for *Happy People*, whose world is one in which threats to comfort are at most hazy memories. *U Saved Me* is, in a sense, the more realistic of these two — the one in which the wolf is at the door, the worm in the wood. So yes, I think the discs are talking to each other. I find it surprising that the religious one winds up being the grittier of the two.

I feel joy,
John



From: Julianne Shepherd
To: John Darnielle, Dylan Hicks
Re: Circus Freakin'

Kells' is the master of the ridiculous, over-the-top sex metaphor. Can he put his key in your ignition? Can he taste your ice cream? But "The Greatest Show on Earth"'s "happy camper" is a choice enough entry to gain front-of-book placement in his seduction lexicon. More interestingly, he makes the ridiculous, over-the-top sex metaphor sound plausible; while he drops corny lyrics like Maria Sharapova lobs balls, they're supported by fantastical arrangements: the gilded flute melodies that thread together the songs on *Happy People*, *U Saved Me's* backing choir, the intimate parts where R slips into narrator mode and just monologues. I had an epiphany last night, whilst relishing that exact moment on "Ladies Night," Dylan — that gently cascading "Daaaaance, yeah" phrase; I am not a religious woman, but I felt like my soul left my body on some *Highway to Heaven*, floating-through-clouds musical ascension. For all R.'s topical matter, rendered in such broad strokes — love and sex and god and dance — dude is an apt director of cinema, constructing an easy, air-brushed, low-lit world where conflict is resolved by song's end. What more can we ask for from music but deliverance?

The "Pied Piper" moniker, it's corny too, but I can't deny the man makes magic.

Off to tell somebody I love somebody,
Julianne



FUTURES' SHOCK JIMMY EAT WORLD LOOKS PAST PREVIOUS SUCCESSES TO SET THEIR SIGHTS ON *FUTURES*.

BY BRIAN BAKER

THREE YEARS AGO, JIMMY EAT WORLD COULDN'T BUY A BREAK.

But after being dropped by Capitol, Mesa's favorite sons rebounded with their most cohesive and forcefully catchy album to date. DreamWorks

contract in hand, the band released *Bleed American* to tremendous critical and commercial response. In summer of 2001 Jimmy Eat World had a bona fide hit.

But after September 11 of that year, the title *Bleed American* suddenly seemed ill conceived. With no prompting, Jimmy Eat World recalled the album, which it re-released eponymously. Although the recall didn't hurt sales, it could have potentially been another unfortunate bump in an already rocky road. But the band never saw it in that light.

"From an outsider's perspective, it does look like a lot of up and down," says Jimmy guitarist Jim Adkins. "On paper, it reads like, 'Band on major label, band dropped by major label... oh no!' But what we saw was always a steady ascension. There were always more people at our shows when we came through towns, we were always playing at bigger places. There were all these signs that clicked with us, like this is still fun, it's growing, it's exciting, we're making

progress. From the outside, it seems like there was more dramatic up and down. For us, it was all up."

With this positive outlook, Jimmy Eat World embarked on a relentless two-year worldwide touring circuit. The success of *Bleed American/Jimmy Eat World* forced the band into additional roadwork but the extra effort proved beneficial.

"We definitely became better as a live band just from the constant practice," says Adkins with a laugh. "I learned that there's always new ways to look at the same thing. I think it's really important to reassess everything on a daily basis."

Once the band had decompressed from touring, the band (Adkins, guitarist Tom Linton, bassist Rick Burch, drummer Zach Lind) set themselves to the potentially daunting task of following up a hit album.

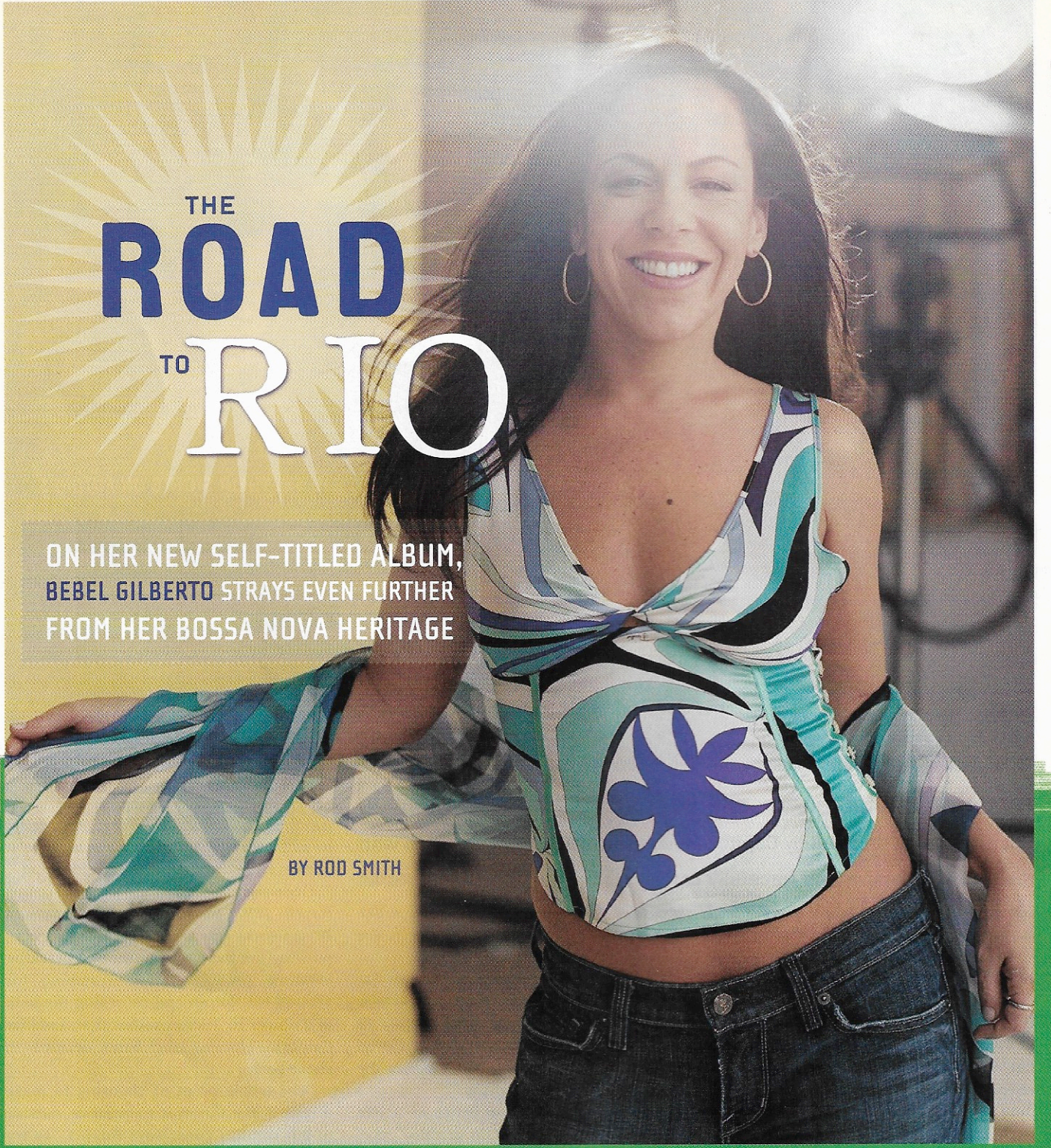
"What ended up being *Futures* is the compilation of the best songs out of all the demos that we had for the past year and a half," says Adkins. "We don't censor our-

selves when we're working on new ideas. Anything is fair game. We're not going to stop working on something because it doesn't have the 'Jimmy Eat World sound.'"

Once again, environmental shake-ups forced JEW to rethink their position. Dreamworks was shuttered early this year, pushing the band to Interscope. Forsaking longtime producer Mark Trombino for veteran Gil Norton and recording the bulk of *Futures* in Tucson rather than familiar California locales, the band decided to shake back.

"The whole point of choosing to make a record like this was to push us outside of our comfort zone," says Adkins. "To try things that would stir it up and make us step up and force us to dig deep."

"We've never been into trying to keep up or be cool," he continues. "We could have eked out a record because it would have been fresh in the minds of radio programmers. But if you don't have a good record, everything else is pointless. The one thing you have control over as an artist is your record and being proud of it. So you goddamn better well be proud of it. It's all you walk away with at the end of the day." ♦



THE ROAD TO RIO

ON HER NEW SELF-TITLED ALBUM, BEBEL GILBERTO STRAYS EVEN FURTHER FROM HER BOSSA NOVA HERITAGE

BY ROD SMITH

FORGET GLOBAL WARMING. NO MATTER HOW QUICKLY THE HOLE IN THE OZONE LAYER GROWS, NEW YORK'S TEMPERATURE IS BOUND TO DROP AT SOME POINT IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS. BEBEL GILBERTO,

who has lived in the city since 1991, is saving up for a house—in Rio de Janeiro. "All my old friends are there," the singer-songwriter reveals by phone mid-tour from her hotel in Los Angeles, "and it's where I'm most comfortable. New York is a lot harder, a lot more challenging. But I shouldn't criticize it, not while I still live there. It's

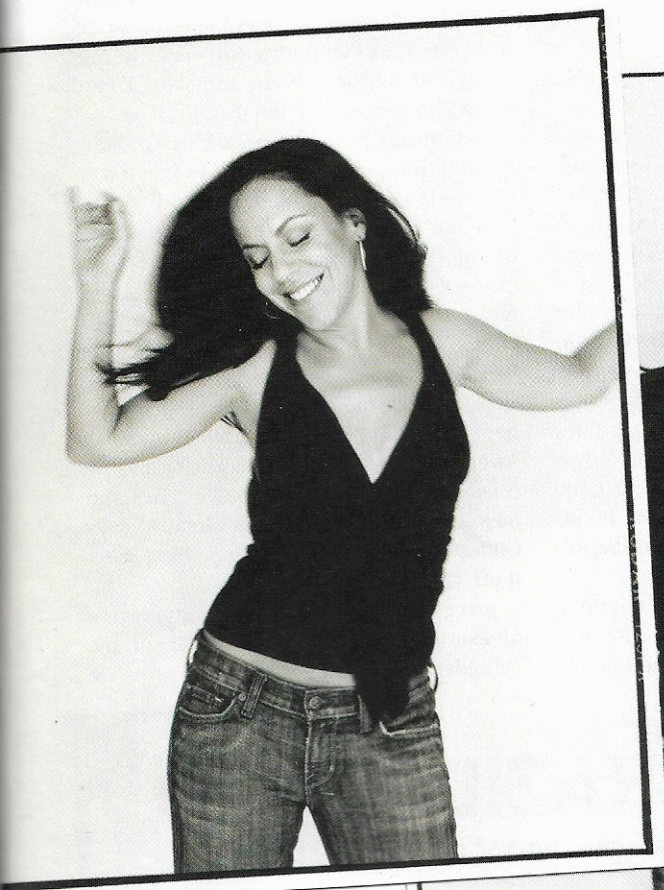
brought opportunities that I never would have gotten in Brazil."

Even with a crackly cross-country cellular connection, the effusive, Gotham-born *carioca* generates more gentle heat than a wedding's worth of chafing dishes—as a conversationalist. Musically, she's easily as downtemperature as her father, legendary

bossa nova kingpin Joao Gilberto. But, as she explains, Bebel (pronounced: Ba-BELL) is neither in the bossa game nor out of it.

"Certainly, growing up as I did, I was bound to absorb my parents' influence," she says. (Gilberto's mother is legendary Brazilian singer Miucha.) But even when I was first starting out, I never considered myself a bossa nova artist. Those times are gone forever."

Still, being steeped in the tradition came in handy for the singer before 2000's *Tanto*



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FOREVER.**

BEBEL GILBERTO

Tempo established her as a solo artist, back when she was still struggling to reconcile New York rents with a fluctuating income. Her rendition of "Girl from Ipanema" (a hit for stepmother Astrud Gilberto in the '60s) on hairdo-challenged pseudo-jazz mountebank Kenny G's *Songs in the Key of G* introduced Gilberto's name and voice to more listeners than appearances on albums by David Byrne, Deee-Lite CPU Towa Tei, and Brazilian post-bossa giant Caetano Veloso, combined. Especially in supermarkets.

Plus, she can't feel too removed from her dad's music. "Baby," the opening track on *Bebel Gilberto*, clearly includes the command "listen to my Bossa Nova." But Caetano Veloso wrote the song and Brazilian rock pioneers Os Mutantes translated its lyrics into English; she couldn't very well have sung "listen to my eclectic, cosmopolitan, 21st century pop" without wrecking the scansion and pissing off friends.

"Baby" is one of two covers on the album, produced by Marius DeVries (Björk, Madonna). That's a far cry from *Tanto Tempo*, which relied heavily on other people's songs. The singer co-wrote

most of the material this time around: "I prefer collaborating with other people," she notes. "I always want the final say over what happens, but I like the resonance of having someone to trade ideas with."

Gilberto did write one song alone—very much alone. But she didn't even write it for herself. "I wrote 'O Caminho' for [Cape Verde singer] Cesaria Evora," she recalls. "I was living in London at the time... 'I had just ended a major relationship. It was cold, dreary, raining all the time. My friends were far away. I was miserable. Cesaria is great with sad songs, so I tried to put as much of the pain I was feeling at the time into what I wrote. Then things didn't work out and she ended up not recording it, so I did. I'm kind of glad it worked out the way it did.'"

So are we; the mid-tempo ballad takes the blue ribbon for gorgeousness on an album where beautiful tracks run about 15 bucks a dozen. "O Caminho" stands as Bebel Gilberto's most affecting song, even though it's all in Portuguese. Accompanied by gentle piano and percussion, Gilberto retains her cool despite an overwhelming sense of loss. At song's

end, she holds out for the possibility of renewal—or at least resolution—cooing “Capaz de um dia achar você/ Sem nem mesmo esperar/ E vou dizer não quero mais pensar/ No que vai ser.” (“Maybe one day I’ll find you/ Without even expecting/ And I’ll say I don’t want to think/ About what will be.”) It’s also one of the least adorned songs on the album, which employs strings and woodwinds for richness and color in lieu of *Tanto Tempo*’s abundant electronic flourishes.

“I’m eternally grateful to Marius for convincing the label to budget in an orchestra,” Gilberto notes, “although it could easily become addicting. I do miss it a little doing some of the songs live.”

At times, the album’s acoustic opulence recalls a classic of the “b”-word era, *The Wonderful World of Antonio Carlos Jobim*. It’s almost impossible to imagine that multi-instrumentalist and producer Pascal Gabriel didn’t find inspiration in Nelson Riddle’s string parts on that hoary gem when he arranged “Céu Distante” (“Distant

Sky”), which he co-wrote with Gilberto. “Pascal is wonderful,” she enthuses. “He’s so inventive, always running around saying ‘Let’s try this’ and ‘Let’s try this.’ Plus, he has some kind of rare microphone—only a few in the world—it’s what makes the vocal sound the way it does.”

Gabriel must also be quite a hypnotist: The musical whirlwind, who first made a name for himself producing S-Express in the ‘80s, somehow got Gilberto to record a you-know-what song without realizing it. “Céu Distante” even partakes of a gently-syncoated rhythmic strategy almost identical to the one that propelled “Girl from Ipanema.” Only its Stevie-Wonder-esque chromatic harmonica part pulls it off the bossa belt. Like “O Caminho,” the song—simultaneously an evocation of Brazil and an expression of touring-related homesickness—was written during Gilberto’s London stay.

But sedentary songwriting is anything but standard operating procedure for her. “Usually, I write on the road,” she reports,

“in hotel rooms or on the band bus. I find that when I get an idea, it’s best for me to record it as quickly as possible—no matter how raw it is—while it’s still fresh in my mind. Otherwise I might forget it. I can always go back and refine the part later.”

“Jabuticaba,” co-written with percussionist and composer Carlinhos Brown (also responsible for the album’s other cover, “Aganjú,”) provides a succulent example of Gilberto’s peripatetic approach. Brown called Gilberto, insisted that she write the lyrics to a song about the jabuticaba (a fruit common in Brazil), and that they be in English. She worked on the project as time allowed, not suspecting at first that her vocal would be laid over a bed of tablas when the time came to record it. “By the time it was finished, the song’s lyrics and melody seemed so Brazilian already,” says Gilberto. “We wanted to do something to set it off, to make it more exotic.”

Just goes to show that, like beauty, degree of exotica lies in the eye, er, ear, of the beholder. Bossa, too. ♦

AND SPEAKING OF BRAZIL...

DJ GILLES PETERSON COMPILES THE COUNTRY’S PAST AND PRESENT ON A TWO-DISC SET



GILLES PETERSON’S CONNECTION TO BRAZIL ISN’T QUITE AS DYED-IN-THE-CHROMOSOMES AS BEBEL GILBERTO’S:

The London-based BBC DJ and internationally lauded club generalist has never lived there; his visits to the country are sporadic whistle stops in his lifelong mission of “joining the dots”—exploring the hidden strands that connect apparently disparate musical styles the world over. But, as he explains during a quick phone call from his home, *Gilles Peterson in Brazil*, the new Peterson-compiled double-disc set on the fledgling Ether label, is the fruit of a love affair with Brazilian music that stretches back nearly long enough to make an adult in the US.

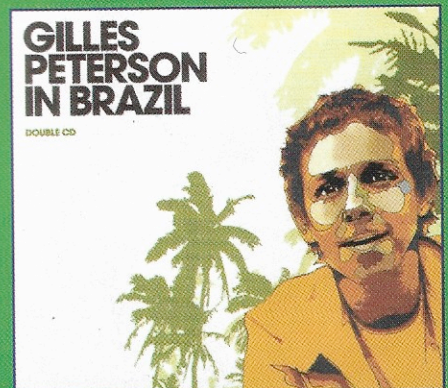
“I first started listening to Brazilian music about twenty years ago,” he says. “It was the jazz from the ‘60s and ‘70s—Aíró Moreira and a number of other players—that first really excited me. Then I got into Milton Nascimento and the floodgates just burst. I go record-shopping whenever I’m there and I’ve been working regularly with a couple of dealers for a long time. I have hundreds of Brazilian records. The funny thing is, Brazilian records tend to be in really bad shape. I’m not sure what it is, whether people there don’t take care of them or

if they just really play them a lot.”

Thanks to the miracle of digital technology, the compilation’s sound is cleaner than a surgeon’s pinky, despite Peterson’s penchant for diving into the remote past. OK, not that remote; his musical time machine stops at the ‘60s. But the sounds on *Classico*, the set’s archival disc, offer no dearth of revelations for most listeners Stateside. The bossa-free mix abounds with jazz-inflected, funky pop, even dipping a toe into psychedelia on Jaime E Nair’s “Sob O Mar,” a wistful, orchestrally-enhanced mini-epic seemingly modeled on Jimmy Webb’s “MacArthur Park.” As with many of the disc’s dozen songs, the understated rhythmic underpinnings on “Sob” are a marriage of ‘60s US beat science and samba [bossa nova’s older and considerably more driving rival for preeminence in Brazil].

“I could set my pulse to samba,” Peterson reports. “The drummers can play softly and forcefully simultaneously in a way you don’t find anywhere else in the world. And they can play loud. I think it was the samba elements in Aíró’s playing that sparked my interest in Brazilian music early on.”

Every bit as versatile as peanut butter, the



style finds a place on *Da Hora*—the set’s contemporary disc (which also features a track with Bebel Gilberto on vocals)—adroitly wed to broken beat by Marcos Valle. On “Parabéns [Danca Do Daniel]” the two styles grind harmoniously, samba guitar adding thrust and consistency to stuttering post-garage machine drums.

“The track has a strong jazz element, too,” Peterson adds. “That’s the wonderful thing about Brazilian music: It keeps evolving in all kinds of ways while finding new ways to present the styles that have nourished it traditionally. It’s that kind of evolution that excites me.”

ROD SMITH



CALL & RESPONSE

A.C. Newman

WE SENT SONGWRITER A.C. NEWMAN, BEST KNOWN FOR HIS WORK WITH THE NEW PORNOGRAPHERS, A CD OF SIX SONGS, EACH IDENTIFIED ONLY BY TITLE. HERE'S WHAT HE HAD TO SAY ABOUT THE SELECTIONS...



THE FIERY FURNACES "Straight Street"

From: *Blueberry Boat*
[THE SKINNY] Complex pop from arty brother-sister act

I totally love the Fiery Furnaces, and this is my current favorite song. It starts out as a great song, but then it switches gears and becomes an even better song—and then it switches gears again. The melodies are simple, but it doesn't matter because it's so disjointed and it has so many parts, and it's even got a great singalong chorus. This is the band you should chase if you're trying to do something interesting.



THE LIBERTINES "Don't Be Shy"

From: *The Libertines*
[THE SKINNY] Rough-edged British guitar pop

Sounds like Blur or something. This is the Libertines? I love that first record, but this isn't really knocking me out. That and the Frog Eyes record were my favorite records of last year. I love that ragged rock feeling, yet totally tight and arranged in a cool way. Very few bands have that balance. You can tell when a band's British, it's not even in the voice, just in the style.



CHRISTINA MILAN "Dip It Low"

From: *It's About Time*
[THE SKINNY] Sexy pop R&B with Asian influences

Sounds like some kind of hip-hop version of Indian film music. Christina Milan? Is she Indian? Well, she's totally ripping them off. Don't they call that carpetbagging? Pop music is all about recycling s***, so you may as well recycle something cool and different. Part of me feels the urge to do something with some sort of hip-hop overtones, but I know it would be so f***ing lame.



WILEY "Pies"

From: *Tredden' on Thin Ice*
[THE SKINNY] British rapper ate all the pies, and he's proud of it

We need a new kind of voice in hip-hop—and by that I just mean a different sounding voice. So, good for the British. It's not Dizze Rascal? I was in San Francisco and I won something at a Ben & Jerry's because the answer was Dizze Rascal and I knew it. I was like 'Hey Dizze Rascal, I'm on the same label as him' and the girl was like 'Right...'



SCISSOR SISTERS "Mary"

From: *Scissor Sisters*
[THE SKINNY] Elton John-style ballad from flamboyant New Yorkers

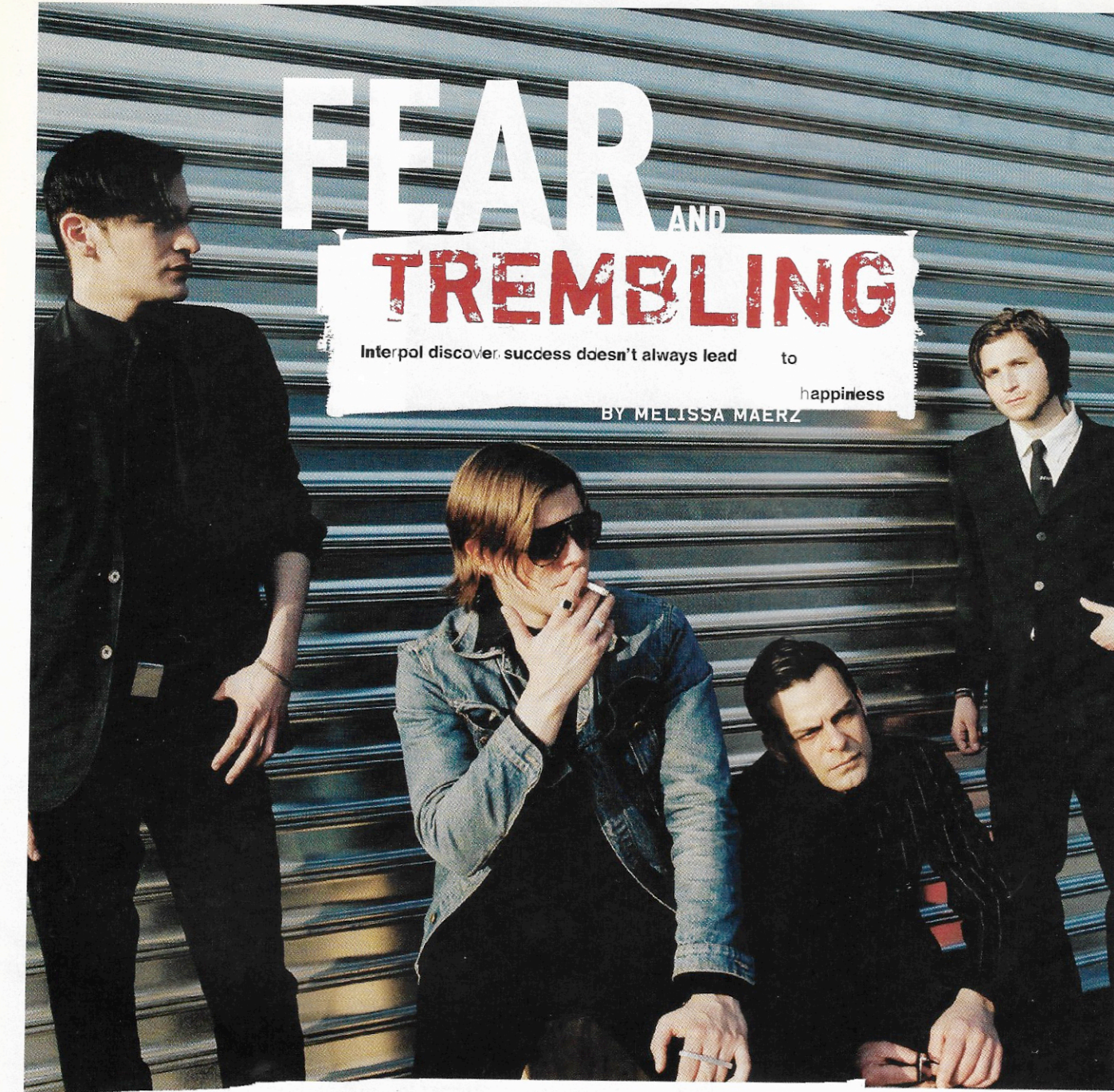
Sounds like Jellyfish. The Scissor Sisters? Aren't they called the new Frankie Goes to Hollywood or something? This is very '70s. I like it. I wouldn't buy it, still, thumbs up to the Scissor Sisters. But enough of them... [Turns off music]



KEREN ANN "Sailor & Widow"

From: *Not Going Anywhere*
[THE SKINNY] Dreamy French chamber pop

I wasn't completely sold until her voice came in. OK, she's kind of losing me here—just kind of a generic chorus. You shouldn't lose people at the chorus. Note to Keren Ann: the chorus is supposed to be where you hook people, not where you lose them. But I'm guilty of the same thing, so don't worry, Keren. I like making the verses the best part of the song and the chorus only like 15 seconds long. ✦



FEAR AND TREMBLING

Interpol discover: success doesn't always lead to happiness

BY MELISSA MAERZ

Even with their stylish undertaker ties noosed loosely above their film-noir jackets and slacks, **Interpol** sometimes don't feel perfectly suited for success. Discussing the breakthrough popularity of the New York group's 2002 debut, *Turn on the Bright Lights*, bassist Carlos D told Magnet, "I'm realizing that a lot of it is mythology and preconceived notions of what it means to be in a band. It's intense. I'm

a little scared. Because I know my life is changing." Well, appearing on the cover of *Spin* under the not-so-subtle headline "The Next Big Things" tends to be a good indication that your life won't stay the same. But, as the world's great philosophers and vending machines will teach you, sometimes change is inevitable. And as Interpol moves from the dark, post-grad post-punk of *Bright Lights* into the vivid, elliptical basslines, whammy-bar murmurings, and romantic vocals of their more quixotic sophomore release *Antics* (Matador), their music seems to be handling all the transitions quite well. Carlos D, however, may have a harder time adapting.

You've said in past interviews that there are three things you don't like being asked about: your fashion sense, your affinity for Joy Division and your place in the New York music scene. The first two seem understandable, but why don't you like being associated with the New York scene?

You don't want to associate yourself too much with an entity that has been labeled by the press and not by anyone who actually lives in New York. The press makes the New York scene seem so much smaller than it is, like there's only one bar all the bands go to, like we're all hanging out at Lit every night or something.

Not too long ago we were touring with the Rapture and I was asking myself why we didn't get to know them better before tour. I mean, we live in the same city and we do the same thing. And then it dawned on me that the whole entire time the press was talking about the "New York scene," none of these bands have been in the same place at the same time for more than a week. There is no "New York scene." We're all too busy touring in Minneapolis and Salt Lake City and Barcelona. We're at this new level where I don't know what the press is going to cover because all the bands that formed the "New York scene" aren't in New York very often. I guess they'll have to find new bands to write about.

What has changed for you on a personal level since 2002, when *Turn on the Bright Lights* catapulted Interpol into Next Big Thing status?

Being in a successful band is one of the most difficult jobs I can think of. It's the existential space it puts you in. You are a crucial cog in a machine that requires you above all to be available. Your manager decides when you do your laundry. Your manager tells you when you're going to be in a certain city. Your manager decides when you have to say goodbye to the people you're partying with in Dallas, Texas. You're think-

ing, It would be nice to keep hanging out in Dallas, Texas, but I'm in a rock band and my life is not my own. That dynamic is difficult to accept. It makes me really lonely. A lot of times it makes me not want to get bigger as a band.

That's interesting, because your new album sounds like it was written by a much happier, more successful band. There are brighter chord progressions, and even a few straight-forward love songs.

YOUR MANAGER DECIDES
WHEN YOU DO YOUR
LAUNDRY. YOUR MANAGER
TELLS YOU WHEN YOU'RE
GOING TO BE IN A CERTAIN
CITY. YOUR MANAGER
DECIDES WHEN YOU HAVE
TO SAY GOODBYE TO THE
PEOPLE YOU'RE PARTYING
WITH IN DALLAS, TEXAS.
YOU'RE THINKING, IT
WOULD BE NICE TO KEEP
HANGING OUT IN DALLAS,
TEXAS, BUT I'M IN A ROCK
BAND AND MY LIFE IS NOT
MY OWN.

The new album has more light in it. I think it's much more subtle than *Bright Lights*. The lyrics aren't as abstract: "Rosemary, heaven restores you in life," that's pretty straightforward—well, as straightforward as a lyric about heaven restoring you can be. But melodically [singer] Paul [Banks] isn't hitting the expected notes. He's tug-

ging at the harmonic possibilities, not trying to ride on the root note.

Who in the band complements you the most musically?

[Guitarist] Daniel [Kessler] comes up with the idea for the song—he writes the motifs, and then I know the music theory stuff, so I fill them in. Daniel and I have a yin yang thing going on. Daniel can only write when he's inspired. And I'm never inspired, so I don't write.

You met Daniel while you were studying philosophy at NYU. Do you think that studying existentialism for four years influenced your outlook on your band, or on your life in general?

This sounds really, really, really lame, and if it hadn't been five years since I last picked up a book, I would explain it in a different way. But existentialism defines the nature of human existence, its codes and requirements and expectations. It says there's logic to it, there's a way to explain it, to tie it all together and give it a central meaning. Existentialism is the one true philosophy of life that explains what it means to experience life as a human being does. A dog might as well be an ant for all of its differences from humans. We have this self-awareness to contend with.

What does your own self-awareness tell you about this stage in your career? Are you happier now than you were when you were playing in an unknown band?

No. I'm definitely not happier. I'm more content. Happiness I would associate with a general sense of life fulfillment—you reflect on yourself and feel good. I don't feel that right now. But I am content. Contentment just means that you're not scrounging for change to buy a pack of cigarettes or do your laundry or eat. Things are working out for us as a band. That's contentment. But it's certainly not happiness. ♦

SOLAR POWER

R.E.M. PREPARES TO CELEBRATE A QUARTER-CENTURY WITHOUT BEING ECLIPSED

BY GARY GRAFF

R.E.M. will soon celebrate its
25th anniversary,

and the group's career track has truly been *Around the Sun* [Warner Bros.], as the title of its latest album proclaims. Since forming in Athens, Georgia in 1980, R.E.M. made its way from the hip underground to the multi-platinum mainstream; now the band finds itself in that weird perceptual realm where it continues to ambitiously experiment with its craft without hitting the commercial peaks that it did in the early '90s.

The group—a trio of Michael Stipe, Peter Buck and Mike Mills since drummer Bill Berry quit in 1997—hasn't let this dip in sales deter its path, although the musicians concede that last year's *In Time: The Best of R.E.M. 1988-2003* compilation and an accompanying tour were designed to remind the audience that R.E.M. hasn't gone away. But *Around the Sun*, recorded in Vancouver with co-producer Pat McCarthy, doesn't pander; instead its mostly lush sonic terrain surrounds 13 fully realized melodies with nuanced arrangements and instrumentation that most closely recall 1992's *Automatic for the People*. R.E.M.'s third album as a trio, it shows that Stipe, Buck and Mills have become even more comfortable with life in that format and feel like they're at a good point in this particular point of their orbit.



You were already working on *Around the Sun* when you went on tour in 2003. What kind of shape was the album in then, and how, if it all, did it change when you resumed recording?

Mike Mills: Y'know, I'm not sure that it had a direction. You just take the best songs and try to make them as fully realized as possible, and then we were lucky we had a surplus. We just picked the ones that a) seemed to be the best songs and b) go together on the record.

Peter Buck: When we went out on tour it felt at the time that it was going to be a record that was more stripped-down, which was kind of my goal. And when we started recording again in January, we kinda recut a lot of stuff, and there were new songs to do. As we started listening to all the things we had, it seemed like whatever the record was, it wasn't going to be as chaotic as I thought it was at the beginning. A lot of the kind of rock things got left off 'cause they didn't fit in with what they were doing. The record just became what it is. It wasn't something that we planned.

Mills: Yeah, we were actually trying to make it less lush than *Reveal*. But I do think we are sort of exploring the beauty you can find in music. I really enjoy things in layers that reveal themselves with repeated listenings.

The nice thing is that *Around the Sun* manages to sound lush but not necessarily overdone. Is that something that happens at the arranging or compositional stage?

Buck: It's mostly an arrangement thing. Personally I always tend to push to keep the first ideas—whatever you come up with right away, do that and just leave it. But a lot of the other guys like to work, maybe add some things, subtract, think about it a little bit.

Mills: We just tried to make sure that we didn't have too many instruments that go from the beginning of the song to the end of the song. That's one way you can keep it from sounding like too much.

Buck: Essentially at the end of the record, when you're mixing, that's when you're gonna sit there and say... What I like to do

is play either the demo or the rough mix and say "Listen, there's a reason we found this exciting eight months go. What is that? And does this new thing have that? Does it have the elements, or what are the elements we really think are important?"

"Leaving New York" is the album's first single. How did that come about?

Buck: I think it was either the very first or very second thing we demoed when we started this whole thing a couple of years ago, before we did the last tour. And it was pretty much the last thing to get finished, vocally. We didn't really do anything to it for a whole year, then at the end of the

"When Clear Channel is owned by the biggest Bush supporters in America and they run or own every radio station in America, you kind of assume that's going to have an effect."

process Michael said, "Y'know, I've got vocals for that. Why don't we edit it up a little bit and play it?" So in a lot of ways it's the freshest thing for us, 'cause no one's heard it to death.

What kind of sense do you get about where R.E.M. fits today, especially after last year's tour?

Buck: Well, in America we haven't sold a lot of records in awhile, and that I assume is because we're not on the radio and we're not on MTV, and I understand that com-

pletely. We've been around a long time. Bob Dylan isn't on MTV or on the radio. If they're not going to play Bob Dylan, I can understand why they're not gonna play us. Then again, outside of America, we're more popular than we've ever been; it's like being the Beatles in Italy or Ireland or England. It's really intense and really fun and really cool.

Mills: I came away going "America's a very strange country," [laughs] and what our place in it is now, I really don't know.

There are some very stridently political songs on the album—"Final Straw," which you posted online last year, and "I'm Gonna DJ" and "I Wanted to Be Wrong." That can be kind of a dangerous thing to do these days, and you're backing it up by playing on the Vote for Change tour. Are you worried about backlash?

Mills: One of the things that people fight and die for is the right to speak up, and to me that's not only a right, it's almost a duty. If you've got opinions about the political process, say something and do something; it's so unbelievable to me that anyone would say you can't. We're very concerned about the political situation in America, so it seemed like if we were going to put that on the record, this was the one to do it. Michael can write about topical things and yet they don't seem dated. That's one of his gifts.

Buck: I honestly don't see a whole lot of upside in it. When Clear Channel is owned by the biggest Bush supporters in America and they run or own every radio station in America, you kind of assume that's going to have an effect. I know that we're probably going to alienate 50 percent of the overall audience, if not 50 percent of ours. On the other hand, I buy records by Republicans, so maybe people are open-minded. I certainly don't sit down with a political litmus test to see if this person is worthy of my dollar.

Mills: I haven't seen anybody spying on me yet [laughs], but who knows? That doesn't mean they're not there. ❖

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reviews

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Jill Scott⁶

*Beautifully Human:
Words and Sounds Vol. 2*
HIDDEN BEACH

Doesn't the video for "Golden" ruin the song? Coming after Donald Byrd's "(Fallin' Like) Dominoes" on my local quiet storm radio station, the lead single from Jill Scott's second studio album could be a lost, timeless disco hit—it has that upbeat '70s melancholia, a little of the old sly militancy too. But Scott is no mere vessel for producers, and her voice has the edgy conviction of the recently self-convinced: when she sings, "I'm taking my freedom/ Putting it on my chain/ Wearing it round my neck," it's as if she had just decided not to pawn it for actual gold.

In the video, of course, she's all smiles: her freedom could be a tampon. But loving Jilly from Philly means hearing that secret frown in the happy authority of her singing, the elusive power that she falls back on, lacking Mary J. Blige's back-row empathy or Erykah Badu's forceful individuality. Scott is more assured than either when it comes to playing with words, too—though she thankfully no longer feels the need to recite

them as poetry. With "Golden" (co-written by producer Anthony "Ant" Bell), she has spun the catchiest pop anthem in two years that doesn't sample the Chi-Lites—and from the simplest handful of repeated phrases. After a few jazz digressions and tinkly ballads, when the album begins to feel like the delivery system for the single that it is, Scott's assured, understated gags keep your attention: "I'm truly sorry, baby, for what I did to you," she exhales on the otherwise middling "Can't Explain." "While you were busy loving me, I was busy, too."

She probably smiles all the time in concert and on video because that's what comes naturally, and she's old-fashioned that way. But there's nothing oldie about the way Jill Scott goofs with your expectations. What's cool about the monogamous brag of "Bedda At Home" is that her unfaithful desire is palpable, even as she enjoys deriding her would-be beef-cake-on-the-side. When the sweet strummy

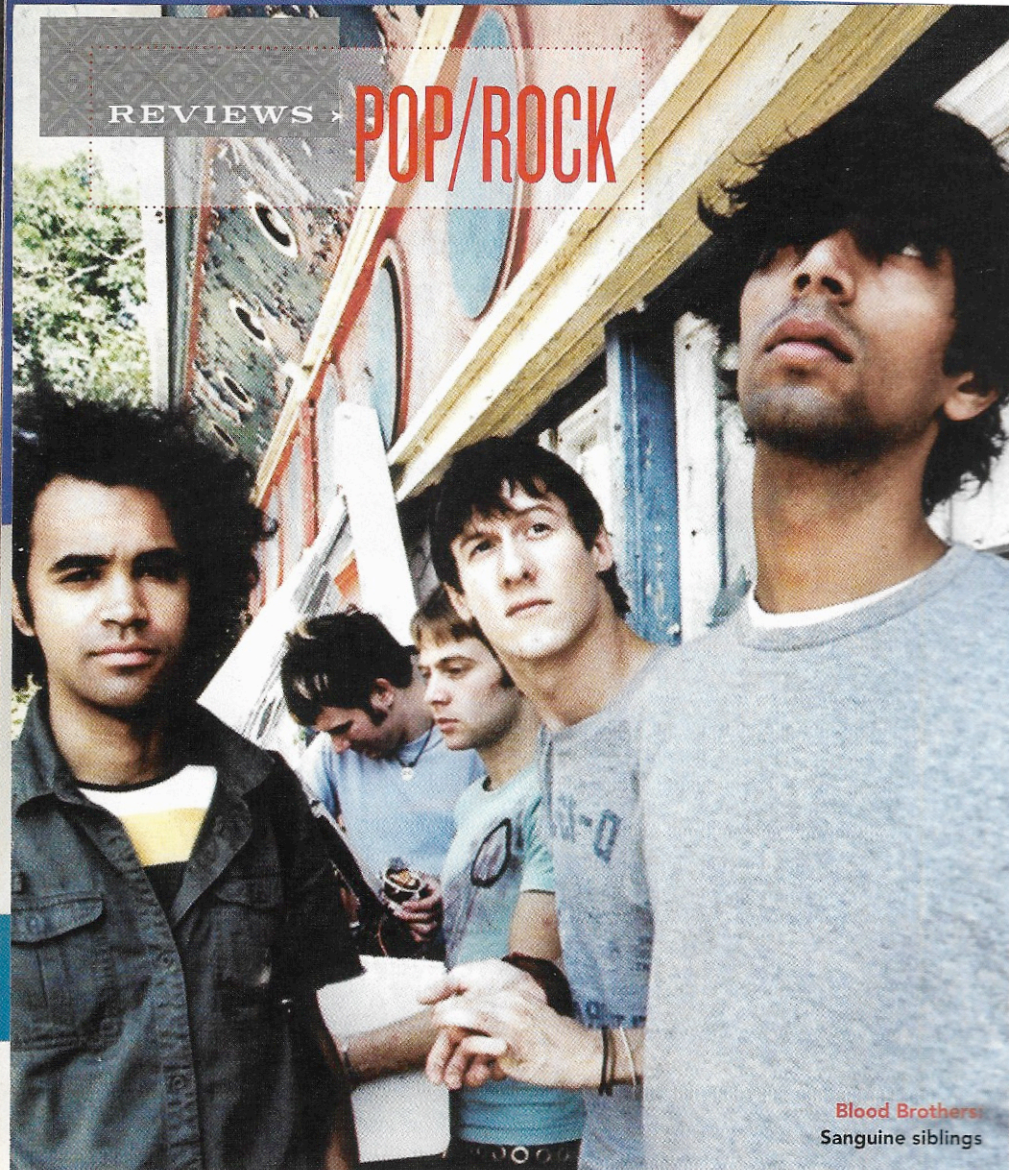
jazz of "My Petition" modulates slightly and reveals itself not as a lover's quarrel, but as a citizen's protest, you realize with a wince that she has snuck goddamned George W. Bush in through Tyrone's kitchen. But these smarts are the admirable corollary to the serious depresso-jazz production that has always defined "neo-soul." Remember, the

sound that is so often called "traditionalist" was created by one weird rap DJ/producer (Ali Shaheed Muhammad doing D'Angelo) and perfected by another (DJ Jazzy Jeff doing Scott's own debut album). What Jill Scott has achieved with *Beautifully Human: Words and Sounds Vol. 2*, however uneven the results, is to take a genre by and for aesthetes, and make

But loving Jilly from Philly means hearing that secret frown in the happy authority of her singing, the elusive power that she falls back on...

smarts accessible to people who wouldn't know D'Angelo from Beverly D'Angelo. She's treating her life like it's platinum, too.

—PETER S. SCHOLTES



Blood Brothers
Sanguine siblings

Blood Brothers⁷

Crimes

BMG/V2



**Screamo experts
are content to fine-
tune their sound**

The Hives' Howlin' Pelle Almqvist may be the sassiest frontman in rock, but he's no storyteller. Nick Cave practically *sweats* evocative, sordid fiction, but his signature drone rocks you like a lullaby. And then you've got Johnny Whitney and Jordan Blilie. The barely legal beanpoles who front Seattle's Blood Brothers wail expertly crafted pulp fiction with pre-apocalyptic contortionist aplomb—but evidently, because they do their thang in a “screamo” context, Whitney and Blilie don't merit same-sentence standing with the aforementioned hipster gods. Save a few early exceptions, this fourth full-length is not nearly the melodic, experimental departure it was rumored to be, just more of the (often exceptional) old same. Elbow deep in their toy chest, scouring for just the right noisemakers, the boys find it understandably hard to part with tried-and-true stand-bys.

Guitarist Cody Votolato is responsible for the major tweaks to the quintet's Tasmanian Devil act. Once a staunch advocate of the ginsu fretboard bitch-slap passed down from Drive Like Jehu to Pretty Girls Make Graves, he exhibits impressive restraint and cunning here, adopting everything from a twisted neo-rockabilly stutter (“Trash Flavored Trash”) to a creepy swarm of ping-pong bends (“Feed Me to the Forest”). The foreboding, house-of-mirrors organ that made *Burn Piano Island Burn's* “Cecilia and the Silhouette Saloon” an instant art-metal classic resurfaces memorably in “Peacock Skeleton With Crooked Feathers,” generating an airtight trampoline for Whitney and Blilie's spastic back-and-forth. Overall, what could have been a breakthrough is instead a second, more focused lap around *Piano Island*. No crime in that... although not much of a score either. —ANDREW BONAZELLI

American Music Club⁸

Love Songs for Patriots

MERGE



**Reunion
album actually
surpasses inflated
expectations**

A solid critical rep can be the worst advertisement for a reunion album—nothing is quite so certain to draw inflated expectations from slavish fans and hyperbolic media. In the case of the recently reformed and much heralded American Music Club, the onus is doubled, on account of the equally lauded solo career Mark Eitzel began after taking his leave of AMC. And so *Love Songs for Patriots*, the first new American Music Club album in a decade, has two distinct press kits of dented excellence and cultish anticipation to rise above.

Fortunately, the chemistry between Eitzel and his fellow Clubbers—guitarist Vudi, bassist Danny Pearson, drummer Tim Mooney and new keyboardist Marc

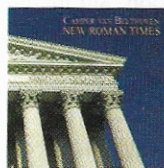
Capelle—is not only intact but exponentially more potent than when the band dissolved after the dour and shambling *San Francisco*. Eitzel is at the top of his game, still every bit as dark and doubtful as in his bleak prime, yet sounding somehow sagely aware rather than hopelessly resigned; when he sings “I've been so lucky” in the Neil Youngian “Only Love Can Set You Free” it's a sincere observation, free from his usual caustic irony or bitter sarcasm. “Ladies and Gentlemen” and “Job to Do” reveal the dense and muscular side of AMC's skittering folk beauty while “Mantovani the Mind Reader” and “Myopic Books” exhibit the powerful acoustic quietude that made 1993's *Mercury* a masterwork. It would have been a welcome surprise if American Music Club returned to match the intensity of their previous work after a ten year hiatus but, in typical AMC fashion, they've exceeded all expectation with a savagely hushed soundtrack and a brilliantly devastating songbook.

—BRIAN BAKER

Camper Van Beethoven⁶

New Roman Times

PITCH-A-TENT



**Take the
skinheads
voting,
take them
voting**

You know we're in trouble when silly bands get political. With pranksters such as

NOFX, Blink-182 and They Might Be Giants already actively campaigning against the Bush administration, *New Roman Times*, the fiercely anti-war album that marks the return of rootsy '80s college-rock absurdists Camper Van Beethoven, only confirms how high the stakes are this November. CVB have dabbled in sly political commentary in the past (particularly on 1989's *Key Lime Pie*), but never with the aching sadness that runs through this record.

Despite these desperate times, and the fifteen years since their last album (during which singer/guitarist David Lowery rode the alt-rock boom-and-bust cycle with his band Cracker), Camper Van Beethoven haven't completely abandoned their sense of humor. Although ostensibly a song cycle chronicling the journey of a misfit kid who joins the military, becomes a drug-addicted corporate stiff and finally joins a rebel anti-government group, *New Roman Times* is peppered with non-sequitur instrumentals and completely unrelated narratives: the devastating "51-7," which explains the decision to enlist, and the heavy artillery celebration "White Fluffy Clouds," are followed by the breezy throwaway "That Gum You Like Is Back in Style," which contains the couplet, "Spent all of Saturday pining away/ For that strange Quebecoise girl in Cirque du Soleil." Such sporadic playfulness ultimately hurts the record; its sprawling mess (twenty-two tracks in over an hour) destroys the emotional impact of the storyline. But that's why God created iPods: edit out the filler, and you've got one of the year's strongest pieces of musical protest.

—AMY PHILLIPS



Drive-By Truckers⁸

The Dirty South



Patterson Hood⁶

Killers and Stars
NEW WEST
Documenting
a new South
that can't escape
its history

Alabama rockers the Drive-By Truckers are today's premier purveyors of Southern mythology, of legends mined from a place where kudzu vines constantly terrorize the collard patch amid threats of world war, death, and taxes. For the group's sixth album, the mood is decidedly darker than on earlier efforts: Patterson Hood and Mike Cooley, the Truckers' songwriters, rival Flannery O'Connor and Carson McCullers' gothic storytelling skills, wielding tales of

Sam Phillips and Buford Pusser as easily as the latter brandished his big stick.

While the opening track, "Where the Devil Don't Stay," wholeheartedly channels Steve Earle's "Copperhead Road," other songs overlay lyrics worthy of Tony Joe White with chunky, clanging riffs that could've been conceived in a railyard. On "Boys From Alabama," an organ swirls through the mix as guitars bristle and drummer Brad Morgan pounds out a metallic beat; for "Puttin' People on the Moon," Hood takes on politics in an odd growl as the band simmers, then soars, behind him.

Hood's solo album, *Killers and Stars*, a set of home recordings cut in his kitchen in 2001, breaks down his creative technique. As a historic document, *Killers*, which captured Hood at an admitted low point, proves invaluable. The lyrics—not always delivered directly into a mic—are often difficult to catch, but powerhouse songs like "Frances Farmer" and "The Assassin" succeed nonetheless. The only drawback is Hood's own voice, as nasal and broken as Neil Young after a carton of Camels. —ANDRIA LISLE

John Fogerty⁷

Deja Vu All Over Again

UMVD/GEFFEN



CCR mainman
evokes his
past without being
trapped by it

John Fogerty rocks to his own particular rhythm. Over his 40-year recording career he's turned out a slew of enduring hits, both with Creedence Clearwater Revival and on his own, but Fogerty has marked it with a series of long absences, including the seven-year gap since his last studio album, *Blue Moon Swamp*. Yet Fogerty has the gift of timelessness, churning out music that's steeped with the gray dignity of tradition but doesn't necessarily sound old—or, perhaps, works *because* it sounds that way. *Deja Vu All Over Again* is certainly an apt title in that regard—its ten songs come off like a Fogerty career retrospective. The compelling, politically minded title track even uses the bassline from "Have You Ever Seen the Rain?," while the grinning "Honey Do" (about a household chores list) sounds like a lost Sun Records gem. "Radar" and "She's Got Baggage" are fierce new wave relics, the latter with a particularly punky flavor, and "Nobody's Here Anymore" knocks off Dire Straits' signature sound—with the full validation of guest guitarist Mark Knopfler. "Wicked Old Witch" recasts Fogerty as the swampy "Old Man Down the Road" storyteller, and the thick, psychedelic hard rock



John Fogerty:
Deja entendu

of "In the Garden" is balanced by the gentle acoustic strains of "I Will Walk With You" and the back porch rootsiness of "Rhubarb Pie." Fogerty's been a lot of stylistic places over the years, and he revisits them, pleurably, on his latest excursion. —GARY GRAFF

The Hidden Cameras⁸

Mississauga Goddam

BMG/SANCTUARY RECORDS GROUP



They call it
"gay church
folk music"

Joel Gibb, the mastermind behind Ontario pop choir the Hidden Cameras, writes the kind of instantly catchy tunes that can catapult a songwriter from obscurity to stardom. Clubby new-wave basslines run underneath jangly guitar, soaring harmonies (led by Gibb's angelic high tenor) and low-budget Spectorian production bluster create a sound that the songwriter, a master of the glib sound bite, characterizes as "gay church folk music." Indeed, Gibb's music strikes a perfect balance between sacred

Hidden Cameras:
Preaching to the queer

and profane, sporting bright folky melodies with more than a bit of liturgical influence and lyrics that deal with the dichotomy of love vs. lust, peppered with reli-

gious—no, make that pagan—imagery that dances along the mystical edge between body and spirit. When he sings "I beg and plead to be underneath, the man with the bread who awakes me" on "That's When The Ceremony Starts," the image could be carnal or innocent—or both. The ambiguity lets listeners get whatever they need from the lyric, to go as deeply or superficially into the symbolism as they like. Even when singing explicitly about gay sex as in "Want Another Enema" or "Music Is My Boyfriend" ("A balding head-banging pre-teen, he seduced me in a dream") his language is symbolic enough to be universal. But lyrics are often beside the point, since the words to many songs are lost in the mix, forming a kind of auditory Rorschach test. But what's unmistakable is the music's joyous, giddy vibe. —J. POET

Joan of Arc⁷

Dick Cheney Mark Twain

POLYVINYL



Tim Kinsella
shores up abstract
songcraft with
concrete rhythms

Tim Kinsella hasn't lost his appetite for abstraction: on Joan of Arc's ninth album, the Chicago entity's *axis mundi* remains wed to the cracks between the wallows where even the most intransigent indie pop takes care of its morning business. But now he's got beats—grooves, even—and seems far less inclined to fit bits of gossamer and smoke from all over tarnation together like complementary pieces from different jigsaw puzzles. Instead he hangs Joan's freak flag on the surreality of his lyrics like freshly varnished laundry. "I know the Hancock Building/ Will eclipse the afternoon moon," Kinsella proclaims on "Queasy Lynn," like Edwyn Collins in a wizard's hat, over sinister strings, metallophone, and a rolling tom-tom-driven shuffle that heralds the imminent arrival of either the Creator or health-care professionals bearing nets.

On "Fleshy Jeffrey" Kinsella drinks even more deeply from night-side ponds, in a manner that suggests either the beginning of the Xiu Xiu tribute movement, a

sluggish manifestation of the Mark Eitzel backlash, or both. Except that it's blood his protagonist is after. "And when the smoke comes arisin' round your window after midnight/ Never forget/ Never forget/ A vampire must be invited," the singer rasps and coos rapaciously, drawing nourishment from the song's melancholy accordion and vibraphone. As with the rest of the album, "Jeffrey"'s rich instrumentation draws on the talents of a small army of darkness: eleven players, not counting producer John McIntyre (Stereolab, Tortoise). Obviously, Kinsella finds rewarding danger in numbers, despite his refusal to paint by them.

—ROD SMITH

Luna⁸

Rendezvous

JETSET



Dean Wareham's
guitar makes sleepy
sexy once again

Ignore Luna if you want. Ever since Dean Wareham kissed his Galaxie 500 bandmates goodbye to go solo-with-backup in 1992, he's traveled the exact same path: honing G500's languidness just enough to leave an imprint but not tear the walls down, buoying the rhythm, snarking up the lyrics, and playing guitar... well, playing guitar about the same as in his previous band, actually, except sharper and more relaxed. Only diehards can tell the albums apart, aside from one having a Guns N' Roses cover (1999's *The Days of Our Nights*, featuring an ace "Sweet Child O' Mine"), another having some audience noise (2001's *Live*), and none of them being quite as good as 1995's *Penthouse*.

Just don't be surprised when Luna sneak up on you—which if you like things like laconic singers, gorgeous guitars, tunes, songs, and hooks, it probably will. And I do mean "sneaks," because once that happens, you'll notice that *Rendezvous* is drowsier than 2002's *Romantica* or *Close Cover Before Striking*, even though the snappiest thing on either, *Cover*'s "Astronaut," reappears here. Maybe Wareham is still clearing his eyes after 2003's very sleepy duo album with his bassist (and paramour) Britta Phillips. But if the mildly randy *Romantica* gave off a contented glow, the franker *Rendezvous* (see "Motel Bambi," "Malibu Love Nest," and—Dean, you naughty boy—"Cindy Tastes of Barbecue") evokes a post-coital exhaustion that's both satisfied ("Ahhh—that was great") and mildly confused ("What city are we in, anyway?").

—MICHAELANGELO MATOS

Luna:
Music for
airports



Mayonnaise⁸

Mayonnaise
BMG/IMUSIC



White,
creamy synth-pop
with a long
shelf life

You don't really need to refrigerate mayonnaise—not the major label supermarket kind, anyway. Mustard's biggest food-lube rival is packed with more chemicals than Courtney Love and Ryan Adams combined—though it's far less likely to start a fight with your [insert any noun here]. The popular emulsion's intrinsic friendliness (goes with everything from peanut butter to lobster, makes an altogether adequate hair conditioner, etc.) is most likely what led ex-Longpigs vocalist Crispin Hunt, mixing magus Will O'Donovan (Sly and Robbie, Serge Gainsbourg, the Clash), and storied electronic renaissance charmer Howie B. to adopt the substance as a handle—not its knack for remaining biologically inert: The synth-pop trio's salmonella-free debut abounds with life.

And love, too, although some kinds don't keep as well as others. On album opener "Death Defying," Hunt gently croons about a strain of affect that's "soul-destroying, petrifying, terrifying, and unabiding" over a bed of sweet, sustained tones and a friskily skittering, clave-driven beat that adroitly sidesteps genre considerations. The song hearkens back to the first golden age of keyboard-driven pop: the genes of Thomas Dolby, John Foxx, and Thomas Leer inform its melodious warmth. But neo-neuromantica isn't the only ingredient that earns *Mayonnaise* a niche on the musical food pyramid: "To My Head" rocks the picnic

like a musical version of Happy Mondays, complete with a chorus that sounds like the long-delayed fulfillment of a request from Their Satanic Majesties. —ROD SMITH

Pinback⁸

Summer in Abaddon

TOUCH & GO



Versatile
indie-poppers
remember life
before Alt

Listening to *Summer in Abaddon* leaves you with the odd sensation that alternative never really happened. Odd, that is, given the pedigrees of Rob Crow and Armistead Smith, previously active in alterna-icons Heavy Vegetable and Three Mile Pilot, respectively. But peel back Pinback's layers—some onion-skin delicate, others artichoke-leaf thick—and you'll reach a traditional pop core bearing no resemblance to either Vegetable's lo-fi prog-punk or 3MP's spazzy math-core.

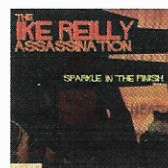
On their third longplayer, Crow and Smith fire up the Wayback Machine. Their first stop is 1986, the year of XTC's neopsychedelic masterpiece *Skylarking* ("Fortress," a peripatetic gem with sinewy guitars and sing-songy vocals, has Andy Partridge's fingerprints all over it). The band later materializes in 1969 outside a London studio and feeds a microphone over the sill of an open window just in time to catch Paul McCartney, John Lennon and producer George Martin putting finishing touches on *Abbey Road* (the pulsing, pianos-and-synths "The Yellow Ones"). At other points they pop in to offer grooming tips to Todd Rundgren (quirky powerpopper "Non-Photo Blue") and to hand Brian Wilson a self-help manual from

the future (the ornate, harmony-rich "Bloods on Fire"). None of this is to say that Pinback is overtly retro; more often than not Crow and Smith simply reference a *vibe* while stamping their tunes with what's become, in the band's six-year existence, an intricate, dreamysexycool Pinback signature. And in 2004, where musical postmodernism is the slavish rule (rather than a strategic flourish) owning a distinctive sound is no mean feat. —FRED MILLS

The Ike Reilly Assassination⁶

Sparkle in the Finish

SIXTHMAN



Hard-rocking populist
humor with bite

Comedy and rock make for strange bedfellows, and most musicians just ain't Frank Zappa, you know? But though Ike Reilly isn't entirely ready for *Whose Line Is It Anyway?* he could probably hold his own during its recurring "Irish Drinking Song" segment—he did cut his teeth a decade back with Chicago's hard-swigging Celtic rockers the Drovers, after all. And on his solo debut, 2001's *Salesmen and Racists*, Reilly discovered his inner Lenny Bruce, skewering (amid rather salty language) everything from weak-kneed liberals to the titular racists to his own Irish heritage. (No less than David Lowery, sensing a kindred satirical spirit, adapted Reilly's "Duty Free"—a drinking song, natch—on Cracker's *Countrysides* album.)

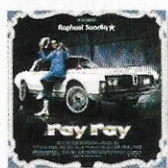
On *Sparkle in the Finish*, Reilly again peers through the crosshairs. In between the inevitable odes to booze and lust, his IRA

takes aim at cross-dressers ("Whatever Happened to the Girl in Me" marries Lou Reed to the Ramones), suicidal saps (garage thumper "It's All Right to Die"), trust-fund kids (lo-fi rockabilly ditty "Waiting for Daddy") and pretty much *everything* about the Big Apple ("Holiday in New York," a delirious slice of Elvis Costello-like fuzztone-and-Farfisa new wave). Like a harder-rocking Todd Snider or a more melodic Clash, Reilly's a populist, and he knows with that mantle comes an obligation to administer tough love, albeit leavened with humor. It's a crazy-ass world we live in, and Reilly's not gonna let us forget it. —FRED MILLS

Raphael Saadiq⁸

As Ray Ray

POOKIE ENT.



Breezy success from the best-smelling man in neo-soul

Where his friend D'Angelo is stone serious (or just stoned), former Tony! Toni! Toné! frontman Raphael Saadiq is puckish and eager for work. He penned the other guy's biggest mid '90s hit, "Lady," and has since settled into the mostly faceless role of R&B studio jobber—as singer-producer, he's the one degree of separation between the Bee Gees and Devin the Dude. Lucy Pearl, Saadiq's brief collaboration with Dawn Robinson and Ali Shaheed Muhammad,

yielded the 2000 single "Dance Tonight," a getting-ready-to-go-out anthem that was equal parts Cam'ron and Edith Wharton (best Saadiq line: "Make sure that you look good/ Make sure that I smell good"). His solo

debut two years later incorporated the tuba, and a good live release followed. Was a non-sucky sophomore studio album too much to hope for?

Nope. *Raphael Saadiq as Ray Ray* is a work of impulse craftsmanship so breezy that it drops the dumb blaxploitation theme almost instantly, leaving you to wonder if it was just an excuse to: a) reveal Saadiq's birth name as Charlie Ray Wiggins, or b) wax goofy. "Rifle Love," a nominal reunion of both the Tonies and Lucy Pearl, rips the melody from "Dance Tonight." But who cares when it also repeatedly samples the cocking and shooting of a shotgun, to hilarious effect, with a sample of someone (maybe even the singer himself) saying, "Damn this sounds good"? On "Live Without You," the jaunty muted trumpet accompanying Saadiq's marriage proposal gives way to a coda full of funky strings and odes to honeymoon sex. If the man can have it all in one song, he will. —PETER S. SCHOLTES

These Arms Are Snakes⁷

Oxeneers or the Lion Sleeps When Its Antelope Go Home

JADE TREE

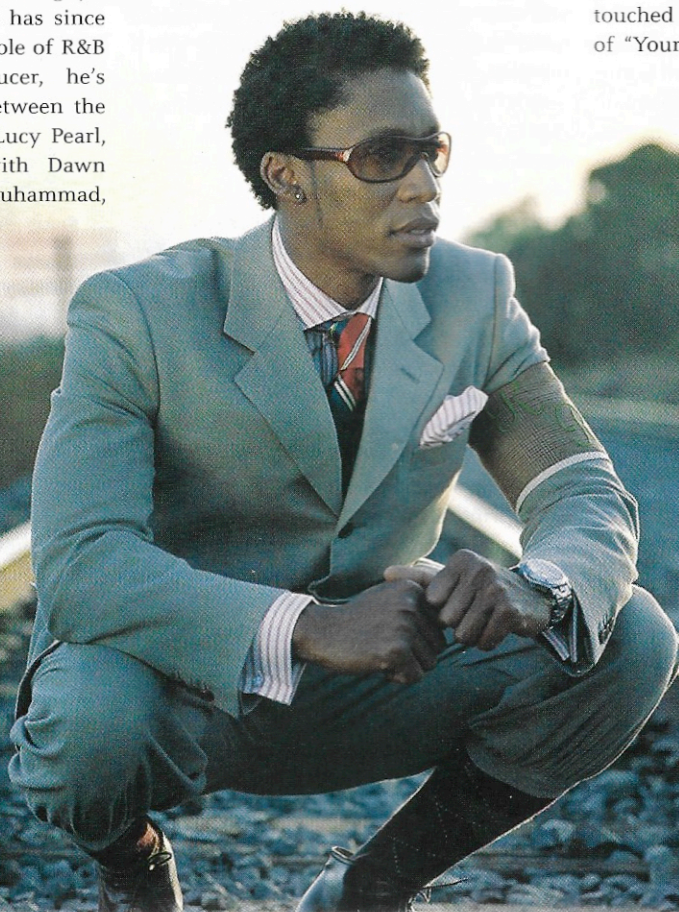


Well-schooled rockers pluck hooks from the midst of noise

Early purveyors of punk dissonance Andy Gill and John Lydon understood the appeal of blending that discord with subtle harmony to create a sound that was poppy yet still viscerally jarring. On their 2003 debut EP, *This Is Meant to Hurt You*, Seattle's These Arms Are Snakes adapted those same lessons, with an ear toward contemporary noise translators like the Promise Ring and Girls vs. Boys, and then dosed the proceedings with flecks of prog majesty, thrash intensity and metal bombast. The result was one of the year's most compelling and singular punk releases.

On their first full-length album, *Oxeneers or the Lion Sleeps When Its Antelope Go Home*, TAAS continues to refine that beautiful chaos. The frenetic Jane's Addiction/GVSB math punk of "The S*** Sisters" leads naturally to the proggy King Crimson-meets-Mr. Bungle howl of "Angela's Secret" and the whipcrack martial rhythms and concussive punk volume of "Big News." On paper, These Arms Are Snakes might seem almost pathologically influenced—we haven't even touched on the Afghan Whigs carnival soul of "Your Pearly Whites" or the PIL-tinged

Raphael Saadiq:
You doesn't has to
call him Ray Ray



maelstrom of the eight-minute epic "Gadget Arms"—but the band's true talent lies in their ability to integrate their widely varied musical interests into their impossibly nuanced core sound. —BRIAN BAKER

Tom Waits⁸

Real Gone

ANTI/EPITAPH



As homey
an apocalypse
as you could
hope to visit

Like nearly all of Tom Waits' recent work, *Real Gone* is a deliberately mucked up effort, a grimy collection of gothic ballads crowded by a man who sounds like he swallowed a thunderstorm, or maybe died. But though *Real Gone* is well-steeped in the same anti-Billy Joel serum Waits first brewed in the mid '80s, the songs are perfectly inhabitable, populated by folks who drive Fords, wear trousers, climb fences, kiss, and eat meat. Waits may be squirrely and apocalyptic, but he's not impenetrable—anyone who chooses to curl up inside *Real Gone* is guaranteed a good meal, some new clothes, and a landscape all her own

Waits' once-trademark piano is conspicuously absent from *Real Gone*, and drums are often supplanted by gnarly (and lung-borne) percussive bits—spitting the same rusty scats on nearly half the tracks, the singer drools knobby rhythms and coughs up bits of bass as he takes a luscious, craggy stab at beatboxing. His pipes are rough, but still defiantly capable, and his sputters—all rasp and roar, burning over and over again—form a gloriously corrosive backbeat. Co-written with wife and longtime collaborator Kathleen Brennan, *Real Gone* is prone to big, snarled warnings ("Don't Go Into That Barn") and anguish-dismissing couplets ("Life's made of trouble/ Worry pain and struggle"), but Waits coats their

prophecies with enough wit and charm to distract from the wicked implications. A sneaky trick, that, and one of Waits' favorites: to force the impossible synergy of the physically unbearable and the emotionally exhilarating. —AMANDA PETRUSICH

Brian Wilson

*SMiLE*⁷

NONESUCH

*Gettin' in Over My Head*⁴

RHINO



Even his old stuff
ain't quite what it
used to be



Imagine the Beatles breaking up in 1967 and never releasing *Sgt. Pepper*, or Dylan scrapping *Blonde* on

Blonde midsession and sitting on the tapes for more than 30 years. Would either of these classics sound the same today if they hadn't already become a part of our collective DNA? That's the dilemma facing Brian Wilson's *SMiLE*, the proposed follow-up to the Beach Boys' *Pet Sounds* that was derailed by Wilson's self-doubt and mental illness. We all know the story and even some of the songs—"Good Vibrations," "Heroes and Villains," "Surf's Up" and "Cabin Essence" all appeared on other albums. But it's impossible to listen to *SMiLE* without wondering what could have been.

Musically the album is majestic, flowing beautifully from track to track, with all the melodic quirks and overproduction Wilson is known for. When listened to in tandem with Wilson's current album, *Gettin' in Over My Head*, you can hear what the songwriter's lost over the years. *SMiLE* soars effortlessly; *Gettin' in Over My Head* sounds flat and strained. The best tracks—"Desert Drive," "Soul Searchin'," "The Waltz"—echo

the glories of Beach Boys past, and the lyrics are inconsequential, with "The Waltz" being such a pathetic meditation on lost love and middle age longing that it almost transcends itself.

Then again, a lot of the lyrics on *SMiLE* might make you cringe too; "Vega-tables" is a goofy ode to just what its title says, a guy cries while he listens to his "Wind Chimes" and a song about a "Barnyard" is full of animal sounds and lyrics about "jumping in the pig trough." *SMiLE* is loaded with great music and jaw dropping production, but the overall concept is oddly disjointed, with fragments of music from the '40s—"Old Master Painter," "You Are My Sunshine," "I Wanna Be Around to Pick Up the Pieces (When Somebody Breaks Your Heart.)"—that make one wonder what was going on in Wilson's mind. —J. POET

Wolf Eyes⁵

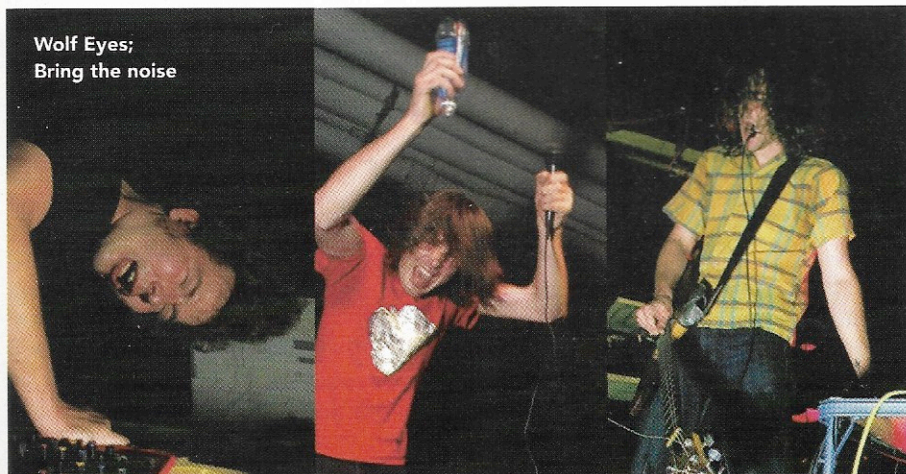
Burned Mind

SUB POP



You don't
make noise
this unrelenting
by accident

Even the biggest Wolf Eyes fans rarely listen to Wolf Eyes records. Mostly, tinnitus-flouting gutter punks stumble into basements to hear the Ann Arbor experimentalists vomit black noise, then drag their deafened corpses back home with the album—a purple-heart souvenir best displayed in a trophy case. Not to say that only the brave ever put needle to vinyl again, but every last amorphous tape loop, dog-whistle sound-wave and scratched-chalkboard screech seem designed as an anthropological experiment to see how far metalheads will go to test their mettle. Album opener "Dead in a Boat" simmers through 45 seconds of near-silence before Wolf Eyes detonate the track with an army of lawnmowers that buzz straight over Trent Reznor's head. (A cruel trick on anyone who heard the quiet intro and cranked the volume elevenward.) "Reaper's Gong" roars with garbage-can crashes and squeaky-marker squiggles that culminate in a final, flatlined tone, while "Ancient Delay" spits the same analogue foghorn over and over until it splinters into static. The only cut that even sounds like a song is "Village Oblivia," an industrial dance groove that warms up for a full minute before making your gristle throb to its sputtering downbeat. No, you can't dance to this revolution. But the fact that Sub Pop even released such melodious din still feels like a coup. —MELISSA MAERZ



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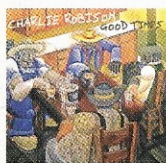
Kenny Wayne Shepherd:
Older and wlier



Charlie Robison⁶

Good Times

DUALTONE



Dixie Chick
husband on the pros
and cons of
getting sloshed

Texas twanger Charlie Robison has released four solo albums in twice as many years. Although, as songs like "Magnolia" and "New Year's Day" prove, there's more bad luck and hard living included here than the optimistic title suggests, Robison must be pretty happy about the company he's been keeping: country music stalwart Lloyd Maines co-produced this album, while Natalie Maines, Lloyd's daughter (and the Dixie Chicks' outspoken lead singer), lends her chops on a couple songs.

The title track swings like a West Texas party anthem, Robison promising plenty of fun; by its follow-up, however, he finds himself sobered up and stuck south of the border. The rest of the album unwinds like a binge drinker's hectic schedule as Robison occasionally walks the straight and narrow before inevitably plunging into the abyss. He tells his tales poetically, and without much remorse, whether outlining the first time he got drunk (at ten, when "I took a big chug-a-lug then I hit the rug and he left me there by myself") on "Something in the Water" or pledging recovery during "Always."

Robison, a consummate songwriter, tackles a few covers here, including memorable takes on Keith Gattis' epic ballad "El Cerrito Place" and Terry Allen's "Flatland Boogie." But his rendition of Gattis' "Big City Blues" is

hardly strong enough to carry the moronic lyrics ("Someone done went and stole my favorite pair of boots/ Goddamn these big city blues," he whines), and, on Waylon Payne's "The Bottom," Robison's baritone drawl sounds hokey, particularly when gussied up with steel guitar accompaniment. —ANDRIA LISLE

Kenny Wayne Shepherd⁶

The Place You're In

WEA/WARNER BROS.



Blues prodigy
grows craftier, if no
less obvious

Kenny Wayne Shepherd made a smart decision after 1999's *Live On* to take a break from recording. Despite the attention he enjoyed as a guitar-slinging teen blues-rock prodigy/gimmick at the beginning of his career, Shepherd came off as little more than another Stevie Ray Vaughan wannabe—except for the radio hit "Blue on Black," which channeled a vintage Bad Company vibe. *The Place You're In* is no less derivative; if anything it sounds like an early Lenny Kravitz album, loaded with '60s-referencing grooves and trippy, psychedelic textures. But at 27, Shepherd sounds more assured as a player, a songwriter and particularly as a singer, taking lead vocals on ten of the 11 tracks here. (Longtime compatriot Noah Hunt sings on "Believe," and Shepherd shares vocals with Kid Rock on "Spanked.") The confidence mitigates the obviousness of Shepherd's sources on his fourth album, while Aerosmith cohort Marti Frederiksen's

production captures an in-your-face energy that lends a fresh flavor to some well-worn conventions. "Let Go" and "Hey, What Did You Say?" are winning throwbacks, and the instrumental album closer "Little Bit More" is aggressively dynamic, with markings of a personal style that Shepherd doesn't demonstrate as readily on the other tracks. It's hard not to wince when he nearly plagiarizes Foghat, of all bands, on "Ain't Selling Out," but after four years away Shepherd has clearly advanced his craft. —GARY GRAFF

Various Artists⁸

Beautiful Dreamer:

The Songs of Stephen Foster

EMERGENT



Eighteen classics,
respectfully preserved

If you needed to pinpoint the moment when American popular music as we know it began, you could do worse than singling out the birth of "Oh! Susanna." With that song's success, Stephen Foster began his career as the first professional American songwriter, a position he solidified by mixing the lyrical conventions of the two primary outlets for the pop song in 19th century America: the minstrel show and the drawing room. Since it'd be trickier to justify the racism of the former than to ignore the classism of the latter, this collection predictably plants its posterior firmly in the parlor. Despite deviations from Alvin Youngblood Hart and John Prine (ravaged), Mavis Staples (soulful) and Henry Kaiser (weird), the tone is mostly uniform (genteel).

The Hart and Staples tracks would seem to be influenced by the color of their skins as much as the content of their characters, and a tour through the Foster songbook that confronted the, shall we say, racial peculiarities of his music—even one that didn't set its guns on "desecrate"—is easily imaginable: R. Kelly soaring across "Beautiful Dreamer" or maybe OutKast reconfiguring "Camp-town Races." But this ain't that—celebration, not recontextualization, is the order of the day. (Though the material occasionally casts the artists in a new light—Alison Krauss' typically placid tones take on a whole new meaning in light of Foster's infatuation with dead and sleeping women.) And so Michelle Shocked doesn't rescue "Oh! Susanna" from your horrid memories of first grade music class by utilizing her (genuinely considerable) knowledge of historic minstrelsy. She does it an even older-fashioned way—by digging in musically to the core of the song. —KEITH HARRIS

Mike Ladd³*Nostalgialator*

IK7



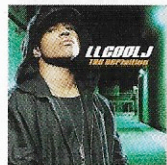
Grad-rap ace proves himself a Rammellzee for the 22nd century

Mike Ladd's 2000 debut, *Welcome to the Afterfuture*, was a sweeping mix of Bollywood, *Blade Runner*, blaxploitation, and Boogie Down Productions, but his occasional pretension and his pro-underground stance got him tagged by the cornier rock press as "saving rap from its own worst instincts." On his one flop, 2003's *Beauty Party as the Majesticons*, he forgot that people don't want to listen to an hour-long harangue about how crappy the music they like is—especially not over a pale imitation of that same music. Which may be why Ladd swung so wide of the net on *Nostalgialator* as to raise the question "Is this hip-hop?" But while actual rapping may form the lesser part of the album, in feel and execution, it's closest to one of indie rap's most revered figures: ikonoklast driver of the biggest truck of all, Rammellzee. The rock stuff sometimes recalls Killa Ram's work in the Ghettojets ("Trouble Shot") and "Wild Out Day" handily outdoes Mos Def's attempt at orchestral-jazz Bad Brains. There's also supposedly some sort of concept-album story going on here, but frankly, life's too short.

Ladd's poetry slamming can wear badly ("his skin sags like muddy bags filled with rocks") but the sonic invention—especially the cavernous glitch-dub-bop of "Off to Mars?"—makes up for his grad school overreaching. Dude is trying something (kinda) new in an era where newness is rewarded with a trip to remaindered-village—cut him some slack. —JESS HARVELL

LL Cool J⁴
The DEFINITION

UMVD/DEF JAM



Maybe Jay-Z had the right idea with that whole "retirement" thing

Ten years back, LL Cool J's career longevity was astounding—a miraculous decade of prominence in the viciously idol-tarnishing world of hip-hop. But rap's pop now, maybe you've heard, and old pop stars never die, they just raise their ticket prices. For instance, LL's current collaborator, Timbaland, has been producing hits for over seven years already, and however wrongheadedly insistent a fickle underground may be that Tim has fallen off, fact is that trackmaster is doing just fine commercially, and he's not going anywhere soon.

Neither, alas, is the man born James Todd Smith. Maybe the absence of J. Lo is supposed to flood us with gratitude, but why is R. Kelly here when Sting is obviously more L's speed these days? Oh, right, the same reason the "blue-eyed blonde[s]" he brags

of banging haven't moved on to Fabolous or somebody—L can afford the bill. You can find him in da club on "Headsprung," if you need an aging sugar daddy, but it's downright depressing to hear Tim's tracks rendered sexless by one of a half dozen male MCs ever aware that women have orgasms too. "A teenpop idol like Hanson"? "Livin' in the Hills but still keepin' it mad real"? What's sad is that the rapper may not even be aware that the mix of playful boyishness and celebrity swagger he works so awkwardly here was jacked by Will Smith years ago. Sadder still, he may know it all too well.

—KEITH HARRIS

Ma\$e⁷
Welcome Back

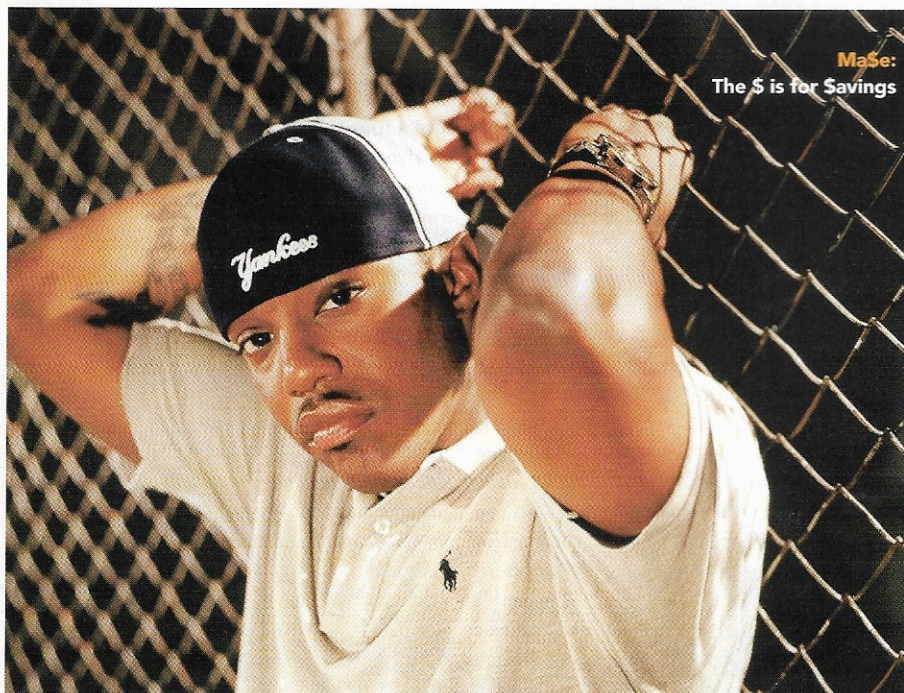
UMVD/BAD BOY



Conspicuous consumption rhymes for the whole family

After swiping a Chuck Mangione song title and keeping the shiny fabrics industry afloat between 1997 and 1999, Mason Betha broke with the rap game, citing irreconcilable differences along the lines of sex and commerce. Now he's back, and it's Reverend Ma\$e to you. On the video set for his easy rolling first single (the title track here) he told the ladies to lengthen their shorts before the eyes of God: "only these cheeks," points to face, cue cheesy Colgate grin. What smacks you upside the head like a can of corn is how clean *Welcome Back* is. It's a throwback to the late '80s pop-rap, like the Fresh Prince and Young MC, which supposedly made the genre "safe." Although Ma\$e is apparently not above worldly possessions ("I had bling before you ever seen me talk"), there's virtually no violence or misogyny. The not-quite-feminist but still pretty moral "Keep It On" is some mutant version of Jermaine Stewart's "We Don't Have to Take Our Clothes Off." (Madonna's "La Isla Bonita" shows up in the next track.) The beats are mostly the current preset cyber-acoustic-soul-flamenco-handclap stuff, with the shining exception of "Money Comes and Goes," which sounds like offcuts from the incidental music to a Sherwood Schwartz sitcom. "Do You Remember" is all low-riding "Murder She Wrote" bass with rattling sleigh bells, Children's Television Workshop xylophones, and the best flow I've ever heard from the Rev. *Welcome Back* probably won't win over too many Lil Jon car-crash fans, but unless you're a Marxist, it's probably the first rap album this decade you can buy for your kid without worrying.

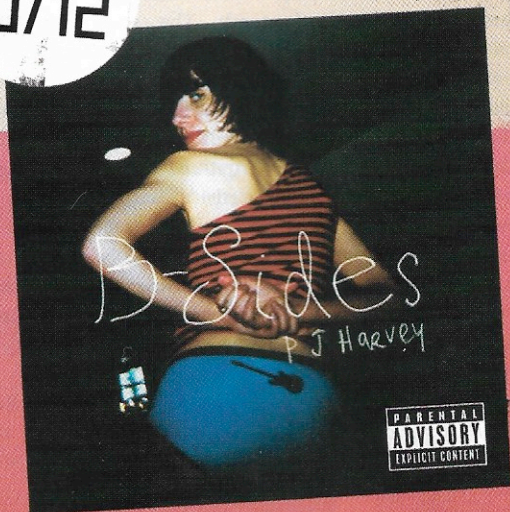
—JESS HARVELL



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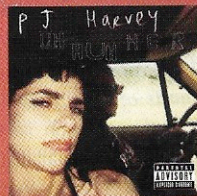
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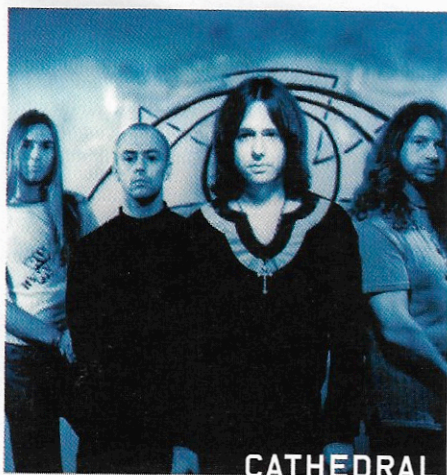


scrap METAL

✦ The future of New Jersey noisecore crew **Burnt by the Sun** is in doubt. Frontman Mike Olender and drummer Dave Witte have officially left the group; remaining members Teddy Patterson and John Aduvato are now deciding whether they'll continue under the BBT's moniker. Olender will do a few more shows with **For the Love Of** before focusing on his web site **The O Report**. Witte will continue on with **Hope Collapse** and touring with **Melt Banana**.

✦ **Exodus** vocalist Steve "Zetro" Souza has officially left the Bay Area thrashers. Again. This abrupt departure led the band to turn to **Exhumed** vocalist/guitarist Matt Harvey as an emergency fill-in for the headlining show in Mexico City last month. Exodus plans to announce a new full-time vocalist in the coming weeks.

✦ Goth metallers **Type O Negative** have postponed their fall tour. A press release on the matter stated, "During a recent medical exam, undisclosed anomalies were discovered and it was suggested that Peter Steele, lead singer, bassist and songwriter, undergo further tests." No make up tour dates have been announced. However, Type O Negative continues to work on the forthcoming release, the first for new label SPV, due in 2005.



✦ Doomsters **Cathedral** have named their upcoming (and eighth overall) album **Seeds of Decay**. It is scheduled for a February or March release through Nuclear Blast Records, and will once again feature artwork from Dave Patchett.

✦ Relapse Records has signed Ottawa noisemongers **Buried Inside**. The band will release its new album **Chronoclast** in January (Canadians will see the album two months earlier—that's a first). Matt Bayles (**Mastodon**, **Isis**) twiddled the knobs.

✦ **Roadrunner Records** has signed Grand Rapids, MI-based **Still Remains**. "I've never heard a band that smashes together Swedish metal, American metalcore and Saddle Creek-ish indie-rock all at once," said A&R man Mike Gitter in a statement. "Then they push it all emotionally and over the edge! Guaranteed, this is the beginning of something great for years to come." The band will enter the studio this fall to record their Roadrunner debut, slated for release in 2005.

✦ In touring news, death metal legends **Suffocation** will begin touring the US in late January 2005 with direct support from Polish death dealers **Behemoth** and Southern-fried grinders **Soilent Green**. Elsewhere, **Bleeding Through**, **Martyr AD**, **It Dies Today**, and **Walls of Jericho** will team up for a US tour through October.

✦ Massachusetts tech metallers the **Red Chord** enter Planet Z studios on November 1st with producer Zeuss (**Hatebreed**, **Shadows Fall**) to begin recording their sophomore full-length album, simply titled **Clients**. The follow-up to 2002's **Fused Together in Revolving Doors** will be recorded over a three-week period and is scheduled for release next spring through Metal Blade Records.

✦ Finally, I may have mentioned it last month, but please allow me to milk it for one more. My new book, **Choosing Death: The Improbable History of Death Metal & Grindcore**, is now finally available through Feral House. The companion CD compilation called **Choosing Death: The Original Soundtrack** featuring previously unreleased material from **Pig Destroyer**, **Suffocation** and **Nihilist**, as well as genre classics from **Morbid Angel**, **Napalm Death**, **Carcass**, **Obituary** and **Death**, will be available November 9 from Relapse Records.

Converge⁹

You Fail Me

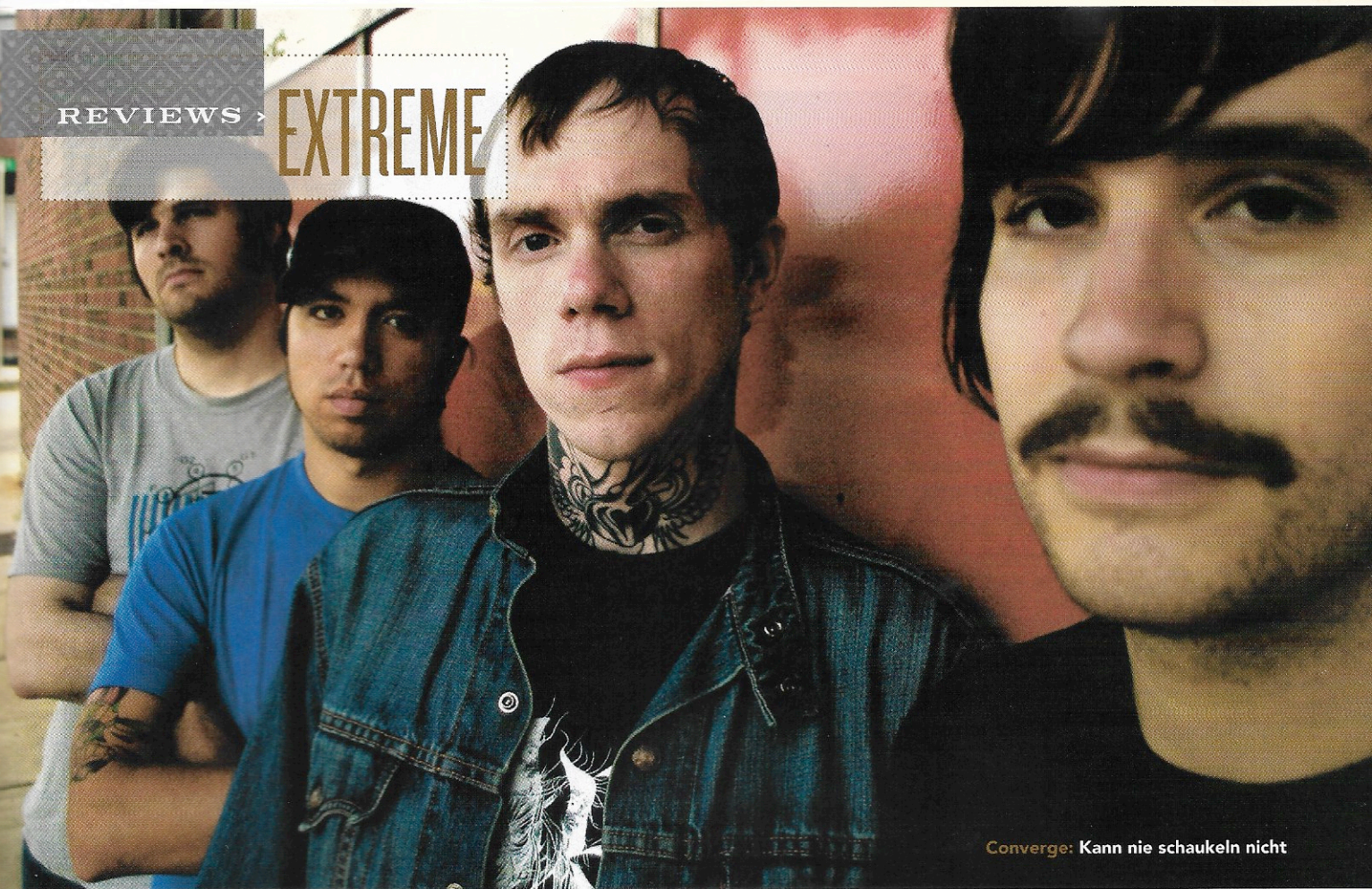
EPITAPH RECORDS



The most vicious art metal on the market

On their follow-up to 2001's unimpeachable *Jane Doe*, Massachusetts art-metal dervishes Converge sound just as vicious and compelling as ever. Kurt Ballou's guitar is practically hermetic—from pre-verb clang to sciatic chug, it's the gravid nucleus that *You Fail Me* both revolves around and is flung from; a centrifugal force that eclipses the linear. Opening tracks "First Light" and "Last Light" assume the ghostly echo of Neil Young's *Dead Man* soundtrack, while "Drop Out" bleeds a scathing nihilism personified in vocalist Jacob Bannon's possessed throat-shredding, spilling over like acrid bile into "Hope Street." "Heartless" careens like a self-propelled clusterbomb; as Ballou's riffs lurch and ricochet, drummer Ben Koller seemingly fends off time itself. The title track assumes a kind of traditional arrangement and readily countable time signature—probably because bassist Nate Newton is the song's prescient force, piloting a low-end that practically ruptures the thin skein of the hearing threshold. "In Her Shadow" is ushered in with the strum of an acoustic guitar (a rare shade in Converge's sonic palette) while soft squalls of treated electronic noise hum underneath. The song's doubled vocal is without scream or scourge, and is as close to actual singing as you're likely to hear in Converge's vast catalogue. "Eagles Become Vultures" feels like hardcore, a vomit-thrust of scattershot aggression compressed into two breathless minutes. *You Fail Me* could end here without being any worse for wear, but the three tracks that follow still trounce anything on the last dumb hardcore record you wasted fifteen bucks on. —J. BENNETT

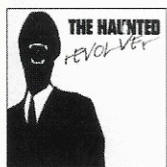




Converge: Kann nie schaukeln nicht

The Haunted⁶

rEVOLVER
CENTURY MEDIA



Updating
their own blueprint
for current
extreme metal

Peter Dolving couldn't have picked a better time to rejoin the Haunted. The Gothenburgers' 1998 debut was a blueprint for an awful lot of what's gone down in extreme metal these past few years, (including Killswitch Engage, Shadows Fall and Lamb of God), and Dolving's hypermanic presence and sheer rebel yell provided the dead-center focus for that stone classic, adding a hardcore edge to the thrash witchery flowing from Patrik Jensen and Anders Bjorler's fretboards.

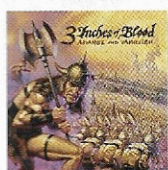
Well, here he is again. Throughout, the collectively penned lyrics are roared out with a bluntness and way with words that belies the fact that these are five Swedes. "Shut your f***ing mouth/ You don't know a single thing about me," Dolving orders on "All Against All." Three times on *rEVOLVER*, the pace slows enough to let the singer drop to a despairing croon. "Abysmal" is a sinister ballad of obsession, "Burnt to a Shell" a chain gang blues number that builds to a

throat-ripper of Anselmorfic proportions and then smolders back down, while "My Shadow" comes over like Ozzy harmonizing with Nick Cave to the tune of Slayer's "Spill the Blood." On "Who Will Decide" Dolving duets with Lou Koller from Sick of It All to prove, if proof were needed, that pair would handily win any face-off with any bunch of young upstarts you care to name. But best of all is "Nothing Right," kickstarted by a trademark Bjorler steamroller riff before Dolving is let out of the traps in full holler, after which the whole band crunches down on the outro. Not many bands around make playing thrash sound as deceptively simple as twelve-bar blues. Can you say, return to form? —NICK TERRY

3 Inches of Blood⁷

Advance & Vanquish

UMVD/ROADRUNNER

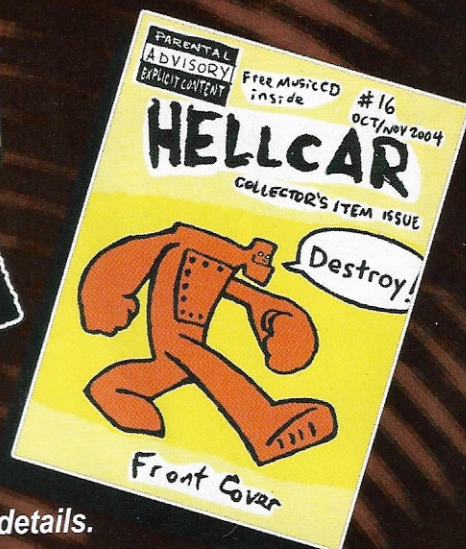


Scream for me,
Long Beach,
scream for me

Canadian sextet 3 Inches of Blood are from a place (they'd probably call it a "realm") where the local record store burned down shortly after the release of *Number of the Beast*, where *Holy Diver* and *Screaming*

for Vengeance are the aural equivalents of *Star Wars* and *The Empire Strikes Back*; where the phrase "storming the castle" is not merely figurative, and where it's perfectly acceptable to call a song "Destroy the Orcs," "Swordmaster," or "Axes of Evil" and not be even slightly joking, not for a second. That realm is Vancouver, where 3 Inches of Blood live (reign?) in an imaginary fortress in their parents' basement, ensconced by a moat that seals them off from their little sisters, communication with the outside world, and other "enemies of metal." They are so not kidding that they even have a Running Wild-style pirate trilogy called "Upon the Boiling Sea," which includes such swash-buckling anthems as "Fear on the Bridge," "Lord of the Storm," and "Isle of Eternal Despair." They're way too metal for just one singer, so 3IOB have two: screecher Jamie Hooper handles all the Kreator parts while Cam Pipes (again, not kidding) invokes the shrieking triumvirate of Dio/Dickinson/King Diamond. It's like two chain-smoking middle-aged aunties in pristine white high-tops and ripped jeans fighting over the bouquet at their younger sister's wedding—only Pipes and Hooper are united in their quest to destroy false metal, so it never actually comes to blows. Still, betcha can't make it through "Deadly Sinners" without a comb, a mirror or throwing at least one goat. —J. BENNETT

HELLCAR



1 HELMET
see you dead
(from the
Interscope CD
Size Matters)

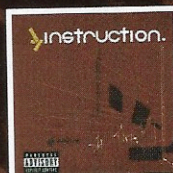
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2 FU MANCHU
written in stone
(from the DRT CD
Start The Machine)



9 BOWLING FOR SOUP
almost
(from the Jive CD
*A Hangover You
Don't Deserve*)



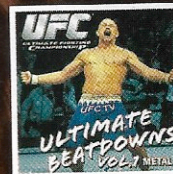
16 INSTRUCTION
breakdown
(from the Geffen CD
God Doesn't Care)



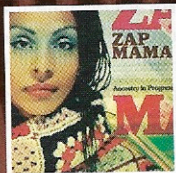
3 VIKTOR VAUGHN
fall back/titty fat
(from the Insomniac
Inc. CD
Venomous Villain)



10 THE BLOOD BROTHERS
trash flavored trash
(from the V2 CD
Crimes)



17 AMERICAN HEADCHARGE
cowards
(from the DRT/
Nitrus/Zuffa CD
*UFC Ultimate Beatdowns
Vol. 1 Metal*)



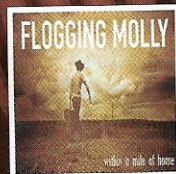
4 ZAP MAMA
(FEATURING ERYKAH BADU)
bandy bandy
(from the Luaka Bop CD
Ancestry in Progress)



11 DANZIG
circle of snakes
(from the Evilive CD
Circle of Snakes)



18 NO WARNING
dirtier than the next
(from the Machine
Shop Recordings CD
Suffer, Survive)



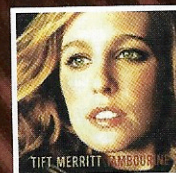
5 FLOGGING MOLLY
(FEATURING LUCINDA WILLIAMS)
factory girls
(from the SideOneDummy CD
*Within A Mile
of Home*)



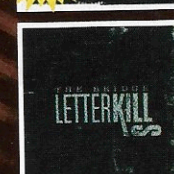
12 CALIBAN
the beloved
and the hatred
(from the Abacus CD
*The Opposite
From Within*)



19 DIECAST
medieval
(from the
Century Media CD
*Tearing Down
Your Blue Skies*)



6 TIFT MERRITT
wait it out
(from the Lost
Highway CD
Tambourine)



13 LETTER KILLS
don't believe
(from the Island CD
The Bridge)



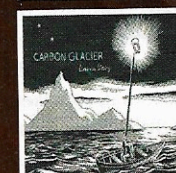
**20 FEAR BEFORE THE
MARCH OF FLAMES**
hey kid i'm a computer,
stop all the downloading
(from the Equal Vision CD
Art Damage)



7 ENDOCHINE
secret
(from the
Trevolution CD
Day Two)



14 PITY SING
radio (fcc version)
(from the Or Music CD
*Demon, You Are
The Stars In Cars
'Til I Die EP*)



8 LAURA VEIRS
snow camping
(from the
Nonesuch CD
Carbon Glacier)



15 ADAM RICHMAN
broken glass
(from the Or Music CD
The Patience EP)

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Muze, or Flogging Molly on
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Blondie⁶

Live by Request

BMG/SANCTUARY RECORDS GROUP



It ain't 1979,
but it ain't bad

Debbie Harry still looks lovely and she can still hit the high notes, but let's not fool ourselves—this ain't *Parallel Lines*-era Blondie doing the soundtrack for an all-night coke binge at Max's Kansas City. No, what you've got here is the band pulling itself out of mothballs to pimp its latest record (in hopeful terms) and sink into the morass of nostalgia (in realistic terms) on a recent taping of A&E's *Live by Request* concert series. Host Jules Asner is as obsequious as they come during the belabored Q&A sessions between songs, and her cringe-worthy questions ("What's on your iPod?") inspire equally moronic answers from the band: guitarist Chris Stein compares himself to Shostakovich.

Though the sound quality on the DVD is better than any concert you've attended in the last fifteen years, the mix definitely favors the low end and the bass occasionally rumbles like the speaker rig in a low rider. Still, the best of the band's material (like the physical appearance of drummer Clem Burke) is perfectly ageless, and it's cool to hear Blondie toying with the arrangements on classics like "Hanging on the Telephone." Ditto for the tracks ("Good Boys" and "Undone") culled from the group's 2004 comeback-after-the-comeback *The Curse of Blondie*. As for any song that incorporates an audience sing-along ("Call Me") or features that guy who acts like Kenny G doing an extended keyboard solo ("Rapture"), the less said, the better. But let's not fool ourselves: you'll need something to tide you over until Blondie's next appearance at the Indian Gaming Casino/Missouri State Fair/your cousin's bar mitzvah, anyway.

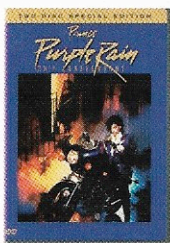
—NICK GREEN

Prince⁸

Purple Rain

WARNER STUDIOS

Documenting
the moment a star became
a superstar



Back before hairspray was outlawed as an environmental hazard, when the only hip-hop songs anyone outside of New York knew were about

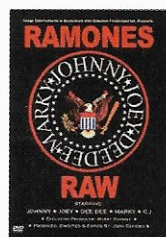
sitcoms or by Blondie, Prince's modestly budgeted, immodestly egomaniacal film debut capped the most mega year in American pop-culture history. Twenty years on, it remains almost ludicrously iconic, from the flamboyant post-glam outfits and archetypal big hair of every member of Prince's band the Revolution, to the story itself—sort of what Horatio Alger might've come up with if he'd remembered to incorporate lace bustiers and blue eyeliner. True, the movie treats women cavalierly, and plenty of Prince's hometown buddies and/or fellow musicians didn't pursue acting careers for a reason. But the sheer force of his onscreen presence, and that of born comedy team Morris Day and Jerome Benton of the Time helps make up for it. Oh yeah, and the best soundtrack album ever doesn't hurt either.

The bonus disc of this "anniversary edition" features a short documentary about First Avenue, the venerable Minneapolis nightclub where *Purple Rain*'s justly celebrated concert sequences were filmed—interesting, though it glosses over the hard times the club has fallen upon in recent years. If you really want a nostalgia OD, though, watch the traffic accident-like MTV footage of the movie's premiere, and recall a time when rock stars hadn't had the spontaneity media-trained out of them. (Highlight: Eddie Murphy taking the microphone away from VJ Mark Goodman and announcing the commercial break.) You can take in a chunk of Prince, the Time, and Apollonia 6 videos too, depending on your tolerance for watching reconstituted footage from the film itself. —MICHAELANGELO MATOS

Ramones⁶

Raw

IMAGE ENTERTAINMENT



An incomplete but
occasionally insightful look
into the band's dynamics

Five seconds of excruciating silence. That's how Marky and Johnny greet director John Cafiero's attempts, during the commentary track that accompanies this over-stuffed DVD, to engage them in a conversation about the City of New York's decision to rename a street after Joey Ramone. Intra-band dynamics are always hard to figure out: the obvious tension surrounding bassist Dee Dee's decision to pursue a solo career in the late '80s rises to the forefront early on, but *Ramones Raw* paints a curious picture of Joey as an awkward, gun-shy introvert. As you might expect of a career retrospective put together under the aegis of the band itself, the DVD is neither here nor there: Marky's off-the-cuff home videos create the impression that the interval between 1988-1993 was *the* defining period for the Ramones.

Judging by the footage culled from European festivals and concerts—as well as a nervous incident where rabid South American fans chase the tour van through the streets of Buenos Aires—the group's popularity came much, much closer to matching its critical acclaim overseas than at home. But for every shot of a Ramone humbling himself to fans, there's a cringe-worthy exchange as the group members grouse about perceived oversights. Although Cafiero's cut of the film doesn't stand particularly well on its own, skipping through the commentary track—where Marky and Johnny unpack some of the in-jokes—proves worthwhile. The best part, though, is the inclusion of *I Ramones*, a 1980 concert film shot at the Castle of St. Angelo in Rome. Watching Johnny bounce and spin around the stage during "Cretin Hop" at the sound-check is a minor revelation—it's no wonder the rest of *Ramones Raw* can't keep the pace.

—NICK GREEN



Ramones:
Vintage cretinism

Alexander O'Neal⁷

Greatest Hits

TABU



Fifteen classic cuts from the man who could have been Morris Day

Thanks to that 21st century version of the telephone game known as “the Internet,” you can read somewhere that Alexander O’Neal was fired from the Time for looking “too black.” In reality, this ‘80s love man never joined the Time, though everyone in the group initially wanted him as lead singer—including Prince, who assembled the funk group out of two other Minneapolis bands, Enterprise and Flyte Tyme. But O’Neal and Prince didn’t get along at an initial meeting, so the job went to Enterprise drummer Morris Day. O’Neal’s former bandmates spent years making it up to him, and since these musicians and producers included Jimmy Jam, Terry Lewis, Monte Moir, and Jellybean Johnson, O’Neal’s hits became touchstones of the “Minneapolis sound” quite apart from Prince—and not just on synth-*thwack* jams like “Innocent” and “Fake.” “Saturday Love,” the 1986 dance duet with Cherrelle, seems more typical: a classic electro couple skate.

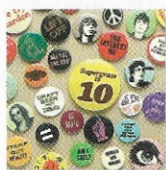
Jam and Lewis wrote 13 of the 15 classic tracks here. Yet amid their vintage clatter, and behind the older singer’s vocal muscle, you sense a yearning for something quieter, maybe the light touch of Quincy Jones. Even as *Greatest Hits* leaves out O’Neal’s career as gentlemen oldie—ignoring the ‘88 Christmas album, the ‘97 return from obscurity,

and last year’s follow-up, *Saga of a Married Man*—the singer comes across as a subtle and controlled force, delicately riding his falsetto like a stormier James Ingram. Maybe he was too black for the Time after all. —PETER S. SHOLTES

Supergrass⁷

Supergrass Is 10: Best Of 94-04

EMM/CAPITOL



A decade of Britpop brilliance, erratically packaged

In the 1960s, great bands used to make ten LPs in five years. Supergrass made but four in twice that time—a pretty meager catalog from which to select a 21-song overview. And presenting these pumping songs non-chronologically doesn’t help matters. Even over the course of just four albums, we’ve watched this trio turn quartet and mature from the hot, hyper puppies of 1995’s debut *I Should Coco* to the mangy, still-rangy dogs of 2002’s *Life on Other Planets*—just like their R&B/garage-to-psychedelia British Invasion forebears. Mixing up this assortment fails to highlight that progression, so at times this feels like a sampler of four different bands.

Yet it’s a measure of Supergrass’ consistency that this collection is such great fun, a spanking overdose of pop smarts, exuberance, classic licks, cracking tunes, and a hot, grinding rhythm section. It’s as easy to get caught up in the post-Buzzcocks amphetamine rush of “Strange Ones” and the LP (and career) opener “Caught by the Fuzz”

or the rollicking neo-Madness bounce of “Mansize Rooster” as it is to be transported by the Sgt. Pepper majesty of “Richard III” and “Sun Hits The Sky” (from 1997’s pinnacle LP *In It for the Money*), not to mention the more recent T.Rex cops and groovy-cool Bowie-isms. Of the two new songs here, the faux-disco-funk-techno (think *Remain in Light* Talking Heads) of new UK single “Kiss of Life” shows where they could go wrong. Whereas “Bullet” shows where they can go right, a meaty slab of Supergrass superpower with a dangerous fuzz bass that makes the old dog sound newly mean—and makes you believe that *Supergrass Is 20* might prove just as delicious in 2014. —JACK RABID

Various Artists⁷

Wheedle's Groove: Seattle's Finest in Funk & Soul 1965-75

LIGHT IN THE ATTIC



An underdocumented side of Seattle music—including Kenny G (!)

The Pacific Northwest isn’t much known for its contribution to funk or soul music; from Portland’s Kingsmen to Vancouver’s Hot Hot Heat and Seattle’s Blood Brothers, the region’s defining legacy has been loud, hairy, and pretty four-square rhythmically, not to mention (psst) heavily white. But in the same way their *Nuggets*-bound neighbors like the Sonics were inspired by the Kinks and Yardbirds, Seattle bands like the Black on White Affair, Cookin’ Bag, and Soul Swingers sprouted up in the wake of James Brown and the Meters wake. These too were garage bands—they just didn’t play rock and roll.

This lovingly compiled document, assembled by Seattle DJ Mr. Supreme from an extensive collection of 45s (plus three ringers, including Supreme’s own Sharpshooters), argues for Seattle’s place in the funk pantheon, and while few of these cuts are up to J.B. or Sly standards, there’s plenty of meat here. The Overton Berry Trio’s organ-led cover of “Hey Jude” skips straight to the coda, crafting a bluesy, churchy groove that breathes life into the overplayed song. A loose bass-and-handclaps breakdown highlights the Topics’ 1971 version of the period’s ultimate PNW rock staple, “Louie Louie.” And you can surprise your friends with Cold, Bold & Together’s two 1975 singles, “Stop Losing Your Chances” and the disco-ish “Somebody’s Gonna Burn Ya”—both featuring a teenaged Kenny G. Not only was he once palatable—turns out he even had the funk. —MICHAELANGELO MATOS

Supergrass:
Too close
for comfort



short reviews



Lateef & The Chief
Maroons: Ambush
QUANNUM

The Bay Area crew Quannum Projects maintains a vibes cartel of soul samples and throwback beats, and Blackalicious' Chief Xcel is its primary trader, gracefully cutting in-the-pocket '70s funk bass and kick-drums with summer smooth jams and crackling snares. Here the Chief arranged and produced a seven-piece band; the soul-food single "Best of Me (Bonus Beat)" stands out, with simple bass sample swatches setting a proscenium for Latyxx MC Lateef's positive mind-message and lilting pendulum of flow. But despite a heartfelt anti-war screed ("If") and a sweet, tangoing lady-ode ("Beautiful You"), the EP never reaches the ebullient heights of Latyxx or Blackalicious. The lyrics are conversational, the beats mid-tempo, Lateef speaks true, and it's all very nice. Heads shall nod, but minds shan't blow. —JULIANNE SHEPHERD



K-os
Joyful Rebellion
ASTRALWERKS

There's eclectic, and then there's just plain confusing. Toronto-based MC K-os front-loads his sophomore effort with a slow-jam dirge rap, a garage-rock-reggae lament, a Chic-funk burner and something that sounds suspiciously like the Cure's "Love Cats." Each of these—and subsequent cuts like Bomb Squad debris "B-Boy Stance" and the squeaky-clean crunk (crober?) of "Dirty Water"—sound more like obligatory demographic-fishing than genuine stylistic explorations, and that dulls whatever impact K-os' vocals might have. Which ain't much—as an MC, he's developed an uncanny resemblance to a dispassionate Mos Def, and as a singer he needs every multitrack he can get. 2002's *Exit* was a solid debut, rarely overreaching despite severe earnestness; here K-os tacks a "self" onto his righteousness. —NATE PATRIN



The Lashes
The Stupid Stupid EP
LOOKOUT!

While this Seattle sextet publicly embraces "the" band couture, particularly the Strokes' blazer/bedhead chic and alluring detachment, the Lashes are secretly voracious students of Rivers Cuomo's encyclopedic pop playbook. "Death by Mixtape" and "It's My Party," the rambunctious bookend tracks on this debut EP, reference defunct pop culture columns from the Emerald City's "rival" alternative weeklies (this writer, regrettably, was responsible for the former), and a similarly playful pugilism is abundant in Ben Clark's lad-on-the-make fairy tales. Guitarist Eric Howk's glittery new-wave lead snuggles tightly against Jacob Hoffman's complementary keys on "Ex-Mas (Young in Love)." And on "Party," the band's standout mission statement, Clark confesses, "It's your party, and I just wanna be invited." But it's all a ruse—the Lashes simply crashed. Guard the keg and pomade. —ANDREW BONAZELLI



Heiruspecs
A Tiger Dancing
RAZOR & TIE

Why do hip-hop bands that play live instruments have such a weakness for glossy keyboards, anyway? We know, we know, you're *soulful*—tone down the aural incense already. But Minneapolis' Heiruspecs are getting somewhere; their grooves seldom try too hard, and the best cut, "32 Months," is also the most overtly experimental, with rapper Felix doing spoken-word over a fractured backdrop that evokes Kerouac's Beats more than DJ Premier's. Felix isn't exactly a natural on the mic, but he gets by with hard work and even harder wit: "I walk my block like a decorated general/ Talk my talk like I have big genitals/ Is there any other way for me to do my thing? Yes/ But any other way just seems to bring stress." —MICHAELANGELO MATOS



Tinariwen
Amassakoul
WORLD VILLAGE

Members of the Touareg people of Northern Africa, who have been in armed rebellion for more than 40 years, these young musicians have exchanged traditional acoustic instruments for electric guitars, electric bass and western drum kits, infusing native styles and rhythms with a rock and roots-reggae feel. The sound is undeniably Arab, but the attitude is rock 'n' roll, built on simple repeating guitar figures that recall Pop Staples and driven by polyrhythmic drumming, handclaps and a call and response that brings to mind Southern Baptist fervor. The relentless dirge "Chatma" laments the long war, the lyric of "Arawan" is rapped over a the tolling of a single chord and accented by ululating female wails, and "Aldhechen Manin" is a gentle reggae skank with chiming blues guitar lines. —J. POET



Daby Toure
Diam
REAL WORLD

Born in Mauritania but relocated by his musician dad to Paris at 18, Toure disbanded his profitable afro-jazz act when he suspected international audiences of exoticism. So sure there's more to his acoustic roots move than meets the ear. Toure's upper register is sweeter than the West African norm and his midrange smoother, his melodies reference the Western pop he came up on without discarding the elasticity of traditional circular structure, and his electronic supplements are so subtle half the time only a cranky griot suspicious of Euro newfangledness could pick 'em out. But no matter how cosmopolitan this might sound in Dakar, it'll sound plenty exotic to Dido fans. Be great if they could hear it, and greater still if Toure didn't mind. —KEITH HARRIS

DVD

by CHRIS KAYE

REVIEWS

Monster Mash-Up

Let's see how many Van Halen puns
I can work into this review of *Van Helsing*

HUGH JACKMAN HAS PRETTY HAIR. This is something you don't see in your average everyday monster hunter. As anyone who remembers *In Search Of* will recall, they tend to use less product than your average everyday Hollywood sex symbol. They also tend to spit when they talk and wear little foil beanies to prevent the government from peeking into their brains and discovering the true location of Sasquatch. But enough about me. Let's talk about *Van Helsing*.

As portrayed by Mr. Jackman, the titular monster hunter of Bram Stoker's design has here been freestyled into a top secret agent dispatched by the Vatican (yes, *that* Vatican) to dispose of supernatural threats and offenses to God such as vampire-on-vampire marriage. When we first meet him, Van Helsing is in France, dispatching a CGI Mr. Hyde, who smashes through the bell tower of the Notre Dame cathedral like Michael Moore on the way to a buffet table. I'm not sure whether we're supposed to think that Dr. Henry Jekyll's alter ego is somehow moonlighting as the Hunchback, but discrepancies in logic and liberal remixing of the classic horror canon is par for the course here, so just go with it. (At least they didn't put in any football jokes.)

VH is a sort of Victorian 007, complete with steampunk gadgetry and a phalanx of villains. In this case, we're talking about a triumvirate of characters from Universal horror flicks of yore: Dracula,



Frankenstein's monster, and the Wolfman. You ready for this? See, Dracula has these little Dracula pods in which he stores his offspring from three slutty vampire chicks. Problem is, the mini-Dracs are born dead, so to revive them, he needs the tech that Dr. Frankenstein has developed to re-animate life. So he dispatches the Wolfman to do his dirty work.

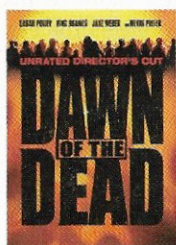
Hey, you work with what you've got, people—and in late 19th century Transylvania, lycanthropes are your Federal Express.

And Kate Beckinsale is why it absolutely, positively has to be there overnight. As Anna Valerious, she's the local girl who's Van Helsing's opposite number. Sporting a corset that could choke a giraffe and an accent ideal for counting bats on *Sesame Street*, Ms. Beckinsale is given little to do aside from standing around and glowering

in her own sexy, pouty way. This is a shame, because 1.) Hotchie-motchie! and 2.) She can actually act when a director wants her to. Why no one does is anyone's guess, but I suspect it's usually because they're just stunned. (Or, in the case of *Underworld*, her last vampire-oriented movie, the director was more concerned with nailing her—she married Len Wiseman, said director, soon after.) At this rate, she's in danger of becoming the female Christopher Lee. Which is worse than it sounds, because it means that when she's in her sixties, she'll be delivering crap dialogue in a *Star Wars* movie.

About here is where I usually go into everything else that's wrong with the movie, but you've probably stopped reading already. At least that's what the voices in my head tell me. Now where the hell is my foil hat?

DVD shorts



Dawn of the Dead (2003) Ach! Zombies!

Evil gets an upgrade in this excellent remake of the 1979 George Romero classic. It's still in a mall, and some slight satire of consumer culture remains. The most notable changes

are in the zombies themselves: inspired by their faster, nastier cousins from across the pond in 2002's *28 Days Later*, these Olympic-level undead go from zero-to-in-your-face in a matter of seconds. Extremely satisfying, though the extras leave a lot to be desired.



Fahrenheit 9/11 Never heard of it

Filmmaker Michael Moore's broadly partisan indictment of the Bush administration is not without its charms—especially during the first half. The film's tone is firmly comic when it deals with the fallout from the 2000 election. Moore builds his case with befuddled everyman humor and Oliver Stone-style conspiracy theorization, but by the time he reaches the halfway point, his argument is diluted by patronizing sanctimony and manipulative treacle—tactics better left to the right.



Ren & Stimpy— The Complete First and Second Seasons

Happy Happy, Joy Joy
The Chihuahua with the Peter Lorre voice and the cat with the brain of a... well, whatever, arrive on DVD with this set of the original

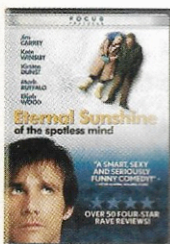
John K.-produced episodes, before MTV stifled him and sent him packing to the hell of Internet-based Flash animation. You eeeediot! Thirty episodes from the 1991-93 seasons, including the banned episode "Man's Best Friend." An image gallery features tons of sketches from the Spumco archives, and audio commentaries complete the goodies.



**Arrested Development:
Season 1**
**The best show you're not
watching**

Call it the David Cross rule: putting the best comedian in America on a TV show is almost a guarantee that no one will watch it. The Fox

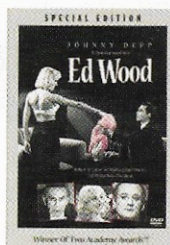
network tried almost everything to kill this show, short of driving a stake through Jason Bateman's forehead, but it'll be back this fall, so here's your chance to catch up. If the *Simpsons* mated with the *Royal Tenenbaums*, this is what you'd get. Buy it now, thank me later.



**Eternal Sunshine of the
Spotless Mind**
**Once again,
Jim Carrey isn't funny**

Yet another meta-textual meta-film from Charlie Kaufman and a guy best known for directing music

videos. Starring Jim Carrey as a guy who decides to get painful memories of his ex-girlfriend (Kate Winslet) zapped out of his head, *ESOTSM* is like *Total Recall* meets *Annie Hall* meets a Björk video. Yawn. I'm sorry, but when I want postmodernism, I'll masturbate onto a copy of *Infinite Jest*.

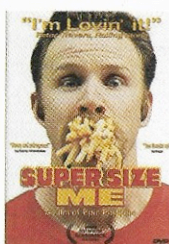


**Ed Wood (Special Edition)
(1994)**

**Tim Burton's best film
appears on DVD**

Tim Burton's biopic of the crossdressing auteur isn't as much an indictment of ineptitude as it is a celebration of it. But the

story here is with the extras: featurettes on makeup, production design, crossdressing and the theremin are excellent. The audio commentary by Burton, Martin Landau and others is a mixed bag, but the deleted scenes and music video (which features Lisa Marie writhing around a graveyard in full suicide girl regalia) more than make up for it.



Super Size Me
**Yo, Ding-dong, man!
Ding-dong!**

It's sounds like an 8-year-old's idea of heaven, but this record of filmmaker Morgan Spurlock's quest to spend a month eating

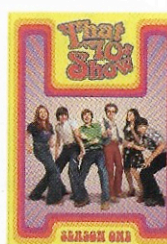
nothing but McDonald's is a horror film of the highest order. It's scary because it's TRUE. See this and you will never again will you look at a McNugget the same way. Unless you're the box that they put McNuggets in. Then I'd imagine they'd still look pretty much them same. Even though you're an inanimate object. And you don't have any eyes.



Garfield: The Movie (2004)
Make it stop

No way in hell that I would ever watch this, so I can't really write a review—I don't care if Bill Murray did supply the voice of the lasagna-slurping feline. And I don't care how shapely Jennifer

Love Hewitt's sweaterpuppies are. I just can't bring myself to do it. Sorry, but life's too short.



**That '70s Show:
Season One**
**Oh my god, Ashton looks
sooo young!**

Demi Moore's buttmonkey and tasty himbot isn't the only thing to get excited about the 1998 (what a long strange trip it's been!)

debut season of the Fox favorite. There's the readhead, who's smokin'. And Topher Grace, who's also smokin'. Waitamminute—everyone on this show is smokin' except for Clarence Boddicker. If nothing else, this box set is an excellent example for how to get pot jokes past a network censor.

MUSIC DVD NEW RELEASES

OCTOBER 5

Al Martino: In Concert
Bill Wyman & His Rhythm Kings: Let the Good Times Roll
Blues Rock: Anthology
Cliff Richard: World Tour
Deep Purple: The Anthology
Devo: Live in the Land of the Rising Sun
Dream Theater: Live at Budokan
Fishbone: Critical Times – The Henhouse Sessions
Legendary Nat King Cole
Loretta Lynn: In Concert
Meat Loaf: Live With the Melbourne Symphony
Muddy Waters: Messin' With the Blues
Pitchshifter: PSI Entology
Roy Ayers: Mahogany Vibe
Samantha Fox: All Around the World
Screamers: Live in San Francisco September 2, 1978
Soundstage Presents Chicago: Live in Concert
Soundstage Presents Michael McDonald: Live in Concert
Steve Hackett: Live Legends in Surround Sound
The Stranglers: Live 1978 in San Francisco
Superjoint Ritual: Live at CBGB's: Changing the Face of Music Through Uncompromising Images
The Alarm: MMIV: Live in the Poppy Fields

The Knack: Getting the Knack
The Stone Roses
Wu-Tang Clan: Disciples of the 36 Chambers
Yes Acoustic

OCTOBER 12

Apollo at 70: A Hot Night in Harlem
Christina Aguilera: Stripped – Live in the UK
Hip-Hop Story 4: The Making of a Rap Star
Jefferson Starship: Greatest Video Hits

OCTOBER 19

David Bowie: A Reality Tour
Goldfrapp: Wonderful Electric
Various Artists: Eric Clapton's Crossroads Guitar Festival
Various Artists: Tell Us the Truth – The Live Concert Recording
Willie Nelson and Friends: Outlaws and Angels

OCTOBER 26

311: 311 Day – Live in New Orleans
Anti-Flag: Death of a Nation
Buddy Holly: The Real Buddy Holly
Carpenters: Singles 1969-1981
Chimaira: The Dehumanizing Process
Drive-Thru Records DVD Vol. 1
Drive-Thru Records Presents: Spectacular Spectacular DVD Vol. 2
Incomparable Lena Horne

Jerry Lee Lewis: I Am What I Am
Jimmy Page & Robert Plant: No Quarter: Page & Plant Unledded
Mary J. Blige: An Intimate Evening With Mary J. Blige – Live From the House of Blues
No Quarter: Jimmy Page & Robert Plant Unledded
Patsy Cline: The Real Patsy Cline
Tales From Golden Age: Bob Dylan 1941-1966
The Doobie Brothers: Live at Wolf Trap
White Stripes: Under Blackpool Lights The

NOVEMBER 2

Wow Hits 2005

NOVEMBER 9

Ahmad Jamal Live in Baalbeck
Grateful Dead: The Grateful Dead Movie
Iron Butterfly in Concert
John Zorn Masada: Masada Live at Tonic
Johnny Cash Singing at His Best
Live Aid
Lunachicks XXX Naked
Lyle Lovett Live in Concert (Featuring Randy Newman and Mark Isham)
Petula Clark Live at the Paris Olympia
Robert Earl Keen 2: Live Dinner
Roc Raida: Adventures of Roc Raida
Rock & Roll Greats: Mitch Ryder & The Detroit Wheels

DVD

NEW RELEASES

OCTOBER 5

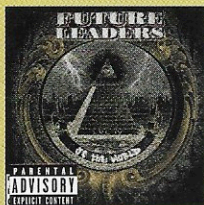
Adam Sandler's Eight Crazy Nights
 After Midnight: Unauthorized
 Aladdin (Disney Special Platinum Edition)
 Alex in Love
 Alfred Hitchcock
 All About John Deere for Kids
 All I Want for Christmas
 The Amanda Show: Amanda, Please! (Volume 1)
 The Amanda Show: The Girls' Room (Volume 2)
 AMC Movies: Carole Lombard Classics
 AMC Movies: Hollywood Drama Classics
 AMC Movies: Lady Detective Classics
 America's Favorite Cars: Complete Corvette 50th Anniversary
 America's Favorite Cars: Complete Mustang 40th Anniversary
 America's Favorite Cars: Fabulous Fords of the '50s
 American Experience: The Kennedys (Complete Set)
 American Experience: RFK
 The Amorous Mis-Adventures of Casanova
 Andrew Lloyd Webber Broadway Favorites Collection (Cats/Jesus Christ Superstar/Joseph & The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat/The Royal Albert Hall Celebration)
 Andromina: Pleasure Planet
 Battle for Warsaw
 Bebe's Kids
 Bimbo Movie Bash
 Black Beauty
 The Black Marble
 Bloody New Year
 Bob Hope: Hope for the Holidays
 Born Rich
 Bramwell Series 4
 Bushnell's Secrets of the Hunt
 The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari
 Cameron's Closet
 Cartoon Network Christmas: Yuletide Follies
 Chaos
 Christmas in Connecticut
 Christmas Vacation 2: Cousin Eddie's Island Adventure
 Conspiracy Theory: Unauthorized
 Dame Edna & Absolutely Fabulous: Best of BBC
 The Dame Edna Experience: The Christmas Specials
 The Dame Edna Experience: The Complete Collection
 The Dame Edna Experience: The Complete Series 2
 Dawson's Creek: The Complete Fourth Season
 Dead or Alive
 Dead or Alive: Final
 Deadline
 Dean Martin & Jerry Lewis Collection
 The Decline of the American Empire
 Deep Impact (Collector's Edition)
 Detonator 2: Night Watch
 Dogs for Dummies
 Ed Wood Jr. Collection
 Fahrenheit 9/11
 Fairly Odd Parents: Channel Chasers
 Farscape: The Complete Fourth Season
 The Fearless Vampire Killers, or Pardon Me But Your Teeth Are in My Neck
 The Five Obstructions
 Flesh & Blood: Hammer Heritage of Horror
 Friday the 13th: From Crystal Lake to Manhattan
 George W. Bush: Faith in the White House
 Getting the Knack
 Gods of Destruction
 Guy With the Secret of Kung Fu
 Hatchetman
 He Knows You're Alone
 Horns & Halos

Horrible Horrors Collection 1
 Horrible Horrors Collection 2
 The Hunger
 Impossebulls: Slave Education
 Iron Eagle III: Aces
 It's Alive
 Jackie: Behind the Myth
 Jackie Chan Collection
 Lady Death
 Laurel & Hardy Collection
 Litanies of Satan
 Little Nemo
 Live Wire 2: Human Timebomb
 The Lost Prince
 Lucille Ball Collection
 Mary Englebreit's The Night Before Christmas
 Midsomer Murders Set Four
 Mortal Kombat: Deception
 Mysteries of the Ancient World
 North and South: The Complete Collection
 Occultist
 Operation Barbarossa
 Passions of Howard Hughes
 Pimp's Tale: Sugar Valentine
 Poirot: Set 10
 Prey
 Puppet Master: Legacy
 Return of the Living Dead Part II
 Ring of Honor: Road to the Title
 Rosalinda
 Roswell: The Complete Second Season
 Saved!
 Scooby-Doo: Winter Wonderdog
 Shawshank Redemption (Deluxe Limited Edition)
 Sonny & Cher: The Christmas Collection
 Sounds Like Christmas
 Tanner '88: Criterion Collection
 The Three Faces of Eve
 Tom & Jerry: Paws for a Holiday
 Train Ride to Hollywood
 Unspeakable
 The Untouchables (Special Collector's Edition)
 Vampyros Lesbos
 Verdict in Blood
 The War Room
 What's Happening!?: The Complete Second Season
 What's New Scooby-Doo: Vol. 4: Merry Scary Holiday

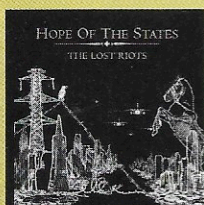
OCTOBER 12

Sive Days to Midnight
 The 5th Wheel: Naked Dating Vols. 1 & 2
 Amour De Femme
 Android
 Andy Griffith Show: The Complete First Season
 Around the World in 80 Days (Widescreen Edition) (2004)
 Ask This Old House: Season 1
 Baby Juice Express
 Banner of Stars II: Complete Collection
 The Bellboy
 Betty Blue
 Bite Me
 Blood Sisters
 Born to Ball: On the Gridiron Vol. 1
 Brave New Girl
 Broadway: The American Musical
 Bush's Brain
 C.S.I. Crime Scene Investigation: The Complete First Four Seasons
 C.S.I. Crime Scene Investigation: The Complete Fourth Season
 Cedric the Entertainer Presents: The Complete Series
 Cinderella
 Coast to Coast
 Da Game of Life
 Damn Yankees!
 The Day After Tomorrow
 Death in Holy Orders
 The Delicate Delinquent
 The Disorderly Orderly
 Dream On: Seasons 1 & 2
 The Elizabeth Taylor Signature Collection (National Velvet/Father of the Bride/Cat on a Hot Tin Roof/Butterfield 8)
 The Errand Boy
 The Family Jewels
 Felix the Cat Saves Christmas
 Gatekeeper
 Gothika (Two-Disc Special Edition)
 Harold & The Purple Crayon: The Complete Series
 The Hepburn & Tracy Signature Collection (Woman of the Year/Pat and Mike/Adam's Rib/The Spencer Tracy Legacy)
 Hooked: The Legend of Demetrius "Hook" Mitchell
 The Jamie Kennedy Experiment: The Complete First & Second Seasons
 The Jamie Kennedy Experiment: The Complete Second Season
 Japon
 Jingle All the Way
 The John Wayne Signature Collection (Stagecoach/The Searchers/Rio Bravo/The Cowboys)
 Kamikaze Taxi
 La Gaviota
 The Ladies Man
 Mary Higgins Clark: Crime of Passion
 Method
 Monster Man
 The Mother
 The Nutty Professor (Special Edition) (1963)
 The Patsy
 Radio Flyer
 Raising Helen
 Ren & Stimpy: The Complete First and Second Seasons
 Reversible Errors
 Salem's Lot: The Miniseries
 Santa Jr.
 Santa vs. the Snowman 3D
 Seven Brides for Seven Brothers (Two-Disc Special Edition)
 Sexy Adventures of Van Helsing
 Shall We Dance
 Shaolin Death Squad
 Shaolin Ex-Monk
 Shaolin Magnificent Armour
 Shaolin Red Master
 Stateside
 Stealing Christmas
 Stephen King Presents: Kingdom Hospital
 The Stooge
 Sub Terra
 Take Me Out to the Ball Game
 Taxi: The Complete First Season
 Terminal Error
 That's Entertainment
 That's Entertainment 2
 That's Entertainment 3
 That's Entertainment Trilogy Giftset
 The Ultimate Billy Jack Collection (The Born Losers/Billy Jack/The Trial of Billy Jack/Billy Jack Goes to Washington)
 Ultimate Jordan (20th Anniversary Collector's Edition)
 Unknown Beyond
 Unsolved Mysteries: Ghosts
 Valentin
 The Wackiest Ship in the Army

Joe Wardone's
Gallery Of Sound



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THE LOST RIOTS
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FEATURES
• 8 New Tracks
• New Album Cover
• Poster Insert

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When cancer hit **Saves The Day** and **Vagrant Records**, they fought back with this two disc compilation filled with music from **Piebald, Taking Back Sunday, My Chemical Romance, Thrice, Saves The Day** and more. With it, you can help us knock cancer out.

Proceeds to benefit **The Syrentha Savio Endowment** for lower-income cancer patients and **The Sean McGrath Fund** which benefits **Gilda's Club** and **The Cancer Center** at **Columbia Presbyterian Hospital**.

**TOTALLY
HITS
2004**

VOL. 2
ON SALE NOW

SELECTED TRACKS

1. *This Love* - Maroon 5
2. *Cold Heart Bitch* - Jet
3. *Scandalous* - Mis-teeq
4. *Roses* - Outkast
5. *Talk About Our Love* - Brandy featuring Kanye West
6. *Turn Me On* - Kevin Lyttle ft Spragga Benz
7. *If I Ain't Got You* - Alicia Keys
8. *Don't Tell Me* - Avril Lavigne
9. *Get No Better* - Cassidy
10. *Overnight Celebrity* - Twista
11. *I Believe* - Fantasia
12. *U Should've Known Better* - Monica
13. *On the Way Down* - Ryan Cabrera
14. *Let's Get Down* - T.I.
15. *8th World Wonder* - Kimberley Locke

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Jessica Simpson
In This Skin

Jessica Simpson
Irresistible

Fuel
Natural Selection

Fuel
Something Like Human

John Mayer
Heavier Things

John Mayer
Room for Squares

Rage Against the Machine
Live at the Grand Olympic Auditorium

Rage Against the Machine
Rage Against the Machine

Rage Against the Machine
Renegades

Modest Mouse
The Moon + Antarctica

Dixie Chicks
Top of the World Tour Live

Pearl Jam
Ten

Chevelle
Wonder What's Next

Tenacious D
Tenacious D

Incubus
Make Yourself

Incubus
Fungus Amongus

Alice in Chains
Nothing Safe: Best of the Box

Alice in Chains
MTV Unplugged

AC/DC
Highway to Hell

AC/DC
Let There Be Rock

Montgomery Gentry
My Town

System of a Down
Toxicity

Korn
Life Is Peachy

Korn
Untouchables

Korn
Issues

Boston
Greatest Hits

Mudvayne
LD 50

Mudvayne
The End of All Things to Come

Five For Fighting
American Town

Soundtrack
A Walk to Remember

Nas
Stillmatic

Ozzy Osbourne
Tribute

Pink Floyd
Division Bell

Pink Floyd
A Momentary Lapse of Reason

Soundtrack
Chicago

Simon and Garfunkel
Greatest Hits

Bruce Springsteen
Born in the USA

Bruce Springsteen
Rising

Offspring
ixnay on the Hombre

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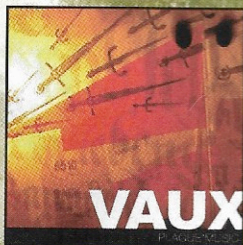


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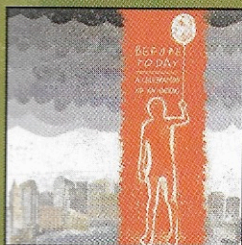
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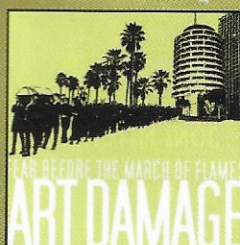
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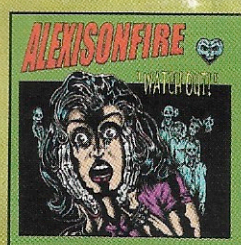
VAUX
Plague Music EP
CD \$6.99



BEFORE TODAY
Celebration of an
Ending
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**FEAR BEFORE THE
MARCH OF FLAMES**
Art Damage
CD \$9.99



ALEXISONFIRE
Watch Out
CD \$9.99

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RECORDS**

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RECORDS
solid
state

Tooth & Nail



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Gallery Of Sound



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Songs to Burn Your
Bridges By
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FOREVER**
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CD \$10.88



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CD \$10.88



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Weak's End
CD \$10.88



HASTE THE DAY
Burning Bridges
CD \$10.88



MEWITHOUTYOU
Catch for Us the Foxes
CD \$10.88



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Nihilism Is Not Practical
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new & notable

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RYAN CABRERA
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CD \$9.99



JONI MITCHELL
DREAMLAND
CD \$13.88



SHINEDOWN
LEAVE A WHISPER
CD \$12.88



BIG & RICH
HORSE OF A DIFFERENT
COLOR
CD \$13.88



HEAD AUTOMATICA
DECADENCE
CD \$9.99



MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE
THREE CHEERS FOR SWEET
REVENGE
CD \$9.99



PAGE/PLANT
NO QUARTER: JIMMY PAGE &
ROBERT PLANT UNLEDD
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Brand «NEW RELEASES»

{featured} new release:



EMINEM

11/16 Encore

Not coming out for another month and a half and your parents are already mad

OCTOBER 5

Acid Mothers Temple... *Does the Cosmic Shepard ...*
David Ackles *Five & Dime*
C.C. Adcock *Lafayette Marquis*
Air Supply *Across the Concrete Sky*
The Alarm *MMIV: Live in the Poppy...*
Alcazar *Alcazarized*
All About Eve *Iceland*
The Alliance *Time Heals Nothing*
Amber *My Kind of World*
Craig Armstrong *Piano Works*
Roy Ayers *Mahogany Vibe*
B.T. Express *Do It ('Til You're Satisfied)*
Barenaked Ladies *Barenaked for the Holidays*
The Beach Boys *Christmas With...Beach Boys*
Jay Bennett *The Beloved Enemy*
Bizzy Bone *Alpha & Omega*
Jimmy Brinx *Business*
Nino Brown *Once Upon a Time in...*
Cake *Pressure Chief*
Cantinero *Championship Boxing*
The Carpenters *Gold: Greatest Hits...*
Codeseven *Dancing Echoes/Dead...*
Luni Coleone *Classics*

Griz *My Evolution*
Lalah Hathaway *Outrun the Sky*
Helmet *Size Matters*
Hem *Eveningland*
Jimi Hendrix *Blue Wild Angels: Sound...*
Robyn Hitchcock *Spooked*
Hope of the States *The Lost Riots*
Hot Snakes *Audit in Progress*
Hot Tuna *Live at Sweetwater*
Hot Tuna *Live at Sweetwater 2*
Hot Tuna *Live in Japan: At Stove's...*
Hothouse Flowers *Into Your Heart*
I Am X *Kiss & Swallow*
Jon B. *Stronger Everyday*
Chaka Khan *Classic Khan*
Kaki King *Legs to Make Us Longer*
KISS *Gold: 1974-1982*
Kool & The Gang *The Hits: Reloaded*
Korn *Greatest Hits Vol. 1*
Laibach *Anthems*
Lemon Jelly *64-95*
Lil' Blacky *Can't Be Stopped*
Lil' Tweety *All Eyes on Me*
Lil' Wyte *Phinally Phamous*
Low Millions *Ex-Girlfriends*
Mare *Mare EP*
Marillion *Marbles*
Bob Marley & Wailers *Trenchtown Rock (box set)*
McFadden & Whitehead *Ain't No Stoppin' Us Now*
Mewithoutyou *Catch for Us the Foxes*
Mobb Deep *Mix Tape Before 9/11...*
David Morales *2 Worlds Collide*
Nazareth *Rampant*
Nightwish *Once*
Nine *Killing Angels*
Ocean Colour Scene *Live: One for the Road*
Jennifer Paige *Flowers: The Hits Collection*
Porcupine Tree *On the Sunday of Life*
Q and Not U *Power*
R.E.M. *Around the Sun*
Sam Rivers *Contours*
Maggie & Suzy Roche *Why the Long Face?*
Brenda Russell *Between the Sun and the...*
Raphael Saadiq *Raphael Saadiq as Ray Ray*

Various Artists *Maybe This Christmas Tree*
Various Artists *Midwest Funk: Funk 45s...*
Various Artists *Soul of the Night*
Various Artists *Tell Us the Truth: The Live...*
Various Artists *Totally Hits 2004 Vol. 2*
Various Artists *Under the Influence: A...*
Various Artists *Virgin Records' Dance Hits*
Voodoo Glow Skulls *Adiccion Tradicion Y ...*
Tom Waits *Real Gone*
Way Out West *Don't Look Now*
Wyclef Jean *Sak Pase Presents:...*
Jesse Colin Young *Songs for Christmas*



DE LA SOUL

10/5

The Grind Date

Hip-hop vets' first indie record features guests Ghostface, Common and Flavor Flav

Colorsound *A Higher Station*
Colosseum *Those Who Are About to...*
Colosseum *Valentyne Suite*
Amy Correia *Lakeville*
Nikka Costa *can'teverdidnothing*
Sean Costello *Sean Costello*
The Crimea *Lottery Winners on Acid*
Crotchduster *Big Fat Box of S****
Tim Cullen *Fun Razor*
Martha Davis *So the Story Goes*
Kimya Dawson *Hidden Vagenda*
De La Soul *The Grind Date*
Damien Dempsey *Seize the Day*
Denver in Dallas *After Diego*
John Denver *Definitive All-Time Great...*
Dennis DeYoung *The Music of Styx: Live...*
Dirty Halo *Think Dirty Pt. 1 EP*
Disengage *Application for an Afterlife*
DJ Irene *Rockstar*
Doobie Brothers *Live at Wolf Trap*
Dr. John *Storm Warning (The Early...*
Dream Theater *Live at Budokan*
Minnie Driver *Everything I've Got in My...*
Dry Kill Logic *The Dead and the Dreaming*
Katrina Elam *Katrina Elam*
Scotty Emerick *The Coast Is Clear*
Val Emmich *Slow Down Kid*
Everclear *Ten Years Gone: The Best...*
The Explosion *Black Tape*
Fatboy Slim *Palookaville*
Fate's Warning *FWX*
Fear Factory *Soul of a New Machine*
The Federation *Federation: The Album*
The Getaway *Take It Back*
Girlschool *Demolition*
Girlschool *Hit & Run*
Good Charlotte *The Chronicles of Life...*



SUM 41

10/12

Chuck

Singer Deryck Whibley is totally Avril's boyfriend!

William Shatner *Has Been*
Kenny Wayne Shepherd *The Place You're In*
Soundtrack *Around the Bend*
Soundtrack *Fahrenheit 9/11*
Soundtrack *The Best of Broadway...*
Spectrum *Refractions: Thru the...*
Still Life Projector *The Dance Riot*
George Strait *50 #1s*
Matthew Sweet *Kimi Ga Suki*
Tamora *There's No Tomorrow Baby...*
The Telescopes *Altered Perceptions*
Tobymac *Welcome to Diverse City*
Utada *Exodus*
Various Artists *A Winter's Night: The Best...*
Various Artists *Classic Rockin' Christmas*
Various Artists *Doctors, Professors, Kings...*
Various Artists *Left of the Dial: Dispatch...*

OCTOBER 12

12 Girls Band *Freedom*
A.M. Sixty *Big as the Sky*
Alabama *Ultimate Alabama*
American Juniors *TBA*
American Minor *The Buffalo Creek*
American Music Club *Love Songs for Patriots*
Joseph Arthur *Our Shadows Will Remain*
Banyan *Live at Perkins' Palace*
Barbara Cue *Rhythm Oil*
Lou Barlow *TBA (EP)*
Tony Bennett *Fifty Years: The Artistry of...*
Big Bad Voodoo Daddy *Everything You Want for...*
Blood Brothers *Crimes*
Toni Braxton *Platinum & Gold Collection*
Carla Bruni *Quelqu'un m'a dit*
Richard Buckner *Dents & Shells*
Busted *Busted*
By the Grace of God *Three Steps to a Better...*
Caedmon's Call *Share the Well*
Camper Van Beethoven *New Roman Times*
Petula Clark *Platinum & Gold Collection*
Keyshia Cole *The Way It Is*
Denver Harbor *Scenic*
Dillinger *Cocaine in My Brain:...*
Celine Dion *Miracle*
Dogs Die in Hot Cars *Please Describe Yourself*
Duran Duran *Astronaut*
Entrance *Wandering Stranger*
Flame *Flame*
Amy Grant *Greatest Hits 1986-2004*
The Heptones *Peace and Harmony*
The Hidden Cameras *Mississauga*
Phyllis Hyman *Platinum & Gold Collection*
Chris Isaak *Chris Isaak Christmas*
Isidore *Isidore*
J Moss *J Moss*
Barbara Jones *Just When I Needed...*
Janis Joplin *Pearl: Legacy Edition*
Lateef & The Chief *Maroons: Ambush*
Donald Lawrence & Co *I Speak Life*
Julian Max *Smoke 'N Roll*
Ali Shaheed Muhammad *Shaheedullah and...*
Olivia Newton-John *Indigo: Women of Songs*
No Doubt *Everything in Time*
No. Mississippi Allstars *Hill Country Revue*

Pig Destroyer
Pinback
Point of Grace
Recover
Reflux
Ike Reilly Assassination
Joe Sample
Santana
Compay Segundo
Brian Setzer Orchestra
Soundtrack of Our Lives
Brad Stine
Straylight Run
Sum 41
The Sun
Chris Thile
Tori
Trans-Siberian Orchestra
Trans-Siberian Orchestra
Various Artists
Various Artists
Various Artists
Various Artists
Various Artists
Various Artists
Various Artists
Various Artists
Robbie Williams
Vanessa Williams
George Winston
Johnny Winter
Yellowman

Terrifyer
Summer in Abaddon
I Choose You
This May Be the Year I...
The Illusion of Democracy
Sparkle in the Finish
Shall Shadows
Santana: Legacy Edition
Compay, Compay
Boogie Woogie Christmas
Origin
A Conservative Unleashed
Straylight Run
Chuck
Did Your Mother Tell You
Deceiver
Get Excited
Christmas Trilogy
The Lost Christmas Eve
A Windham Hill Christmas...
Matador at Fifteen
Reggae Pulse 4: Christmas...
Rugrats Holiday Classics
Tapper Zukie Presents...
The Celtic Circle 2
The Very Best of Cha Cha...
Trojan Seventies Box Set
Trojan Sixties Box Set
Ultimate Christmas 2
Greatest Hits
Silver & Gold
Montana: A Love Story
Second Winter: Legacy ...
Yellow Fever: The Early Years

OCTOBER 19

3 Inches of Blood
404 Soldierz
Bryan Adams
John Anderson
Anti-Flag
Gene Autry
Bone Brothers
Brooks & Dunn
Bury Your Dead
Vanessa Carlton
Castanets
Floyd Cramer
Cult of Luna
Amy Dalley
Diecast
The Diplomats
Plácido Domingo
Mary Duff
Flick
Flunk
Pat Green
The Haunted
Heart
Hed P.E.
Highway 101
The Hives
William Hung
Michael Jackson
Jimmy Eat World
Freedy Johnston
Tom Jones & J. Holland
Le Tigre
The Leo & The Pharm...
Me First & ...Gimmes
John Mellencamp
More!
The Music
Negativland
The Neville Brothers
Newsboys
No Warning
O'Ryan
October File

Advance and Vanquish
All Out War
Room Service
Ultimate John Anderson
A New Kind of Army
The Essential Gene Autry
Bone Brothers
Greatest Hits 2
Cover Your Tracks
Harmonium
Cathedral
Country Classics Vol. One
Salvation
Amy Dalley
Tearing Down Your Blue...
Mix Tape
Essential Plácido Domingo
Heartbreaker
Iron Bottom Sound
Morning Star
Lucky Ones
rEVOLVER
A Lovemongers Christmas
Raise Hell
10 All-Time Greatest Hits
Barely Legal
Hung for the Holidays
The Ultimate Collection...
Futures
The Way I Were
Tom Jones & Jools Holland
This Island
Shake the Sheets
Play Jonny's Bar Mitzvah
Words & Music: Greatest...
Lucky Strike
Welcome to the North
Helter Stupid
Walkin' in the Shadows of...
Devotion
Suffer, Survive
O'Ryan
A Long Walk on a Short Pier

Pink Martini
Placebo
LeAnn Rimes
Ringside
Shannon
The Shape Shifters
Sick of It All
Elliott Smith
Soundtrack
Soundtrack
Rod Stewart
Bettye Swann
Three Dog Night
Train
Urban Mystic
Various Artists
Various Artists



Various Artists
Various Artists

OCTOBER 26

Kelli Ali
Mose Allison
Allister
Allister
American Head Charge
Antler
Atlanta Rhythm Section
B.D.A.
Nick Cave & Bad Seeds
Peter Cetera
Eric Clapton
Leonard Cohen
The Cross Movement
Da Beatminerz
Darkthrone's Fenriz...
Day of Fire
Depeche Mode
Dimitri From Paris &...
Discharge
The Donnas
Draw Blood
The Early November
The Early November
Fabolous
Finch
Forced Reality
The Futureheads
Jerry Garcia Band
Jerry Garcia
Grateful Dead
Hall & Oates
Hidden in Plain View
Steve Holy
Home Grown
Home Grown
I Can Make a Mess...
Invocation of Nehek
Jacki-O
J.J. Jackson
Jobriath
Jumbos Kill Crane
Shawn Kane
King Dust
Kingfish
Shannon Lawson
Byron Lee & Dragonaires
John Legend
Luna
Marilyn Manson...Kids

Hang On Little Tomato
Once More With Feeling
What a Wonderful World
Ringside
Let the Music Play: The...
The Shape Shifters Was Here
Outtakes for Outcasts
From a Basement on the Hill
Everwood
Ray!
The Great American...
Bettye Swann
35th Anniversary Hits...
Alive at Last
Ghetto Revelations
Broadway: The American...
Enjoy Every Sandwich:...

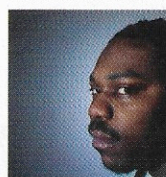
LE TIGRE

This Island
Singer Kathleen Hanna
is totally Adrock's girlfriend!

For the Kids Too
What Is Hip: Remix...Vol 1

Psychic Cat
Hello There Universe
Dead Ends and Girlfriends
Last Stop Suburbia
The Feeding
Antler
All Their Best
Better Days Ahead
Abattoir Blues/The Lyre...
You Gotta Love Christmas
461 Ocean Boulevard...
Dear Heather
Higher Definition
Fully Loaded With Static
Best of...Black Metal
Day of Fire
Remixes 84-04
Kings of Disco
Society's Victims
Gold Medal
The Calm Before the Storm
For All of This
The Room's Too Cold
Real Talk
Falling Into Place
Unheard, Unreleased and...
The Futureheads
Don't Let Go
Shining Star
So Many Roads (box set)
Our Kind of Soul
Hidden in Plain View
Different Tonight
Kings of Pop
When It All Comes Down
I Can Make a Mess Like...
TBA
Poe Little Rich Girl
But It's Alright!/ Dig Girls
Lonely Planet Boy
The Slow Decay
Southern Comfort
Full Denim Jacket
Kingfish
Big Yee-Haw
Jamaica Ska & Other...
Get Lifted
Rendezvous
White Trash

Mario
Cerys Matthews
Donnie McClurkin
Michael McDonald
Mogwai
The MovieLife
The MovieLife
Willie Nelson
The New Breed
New Edition
New Found Glory
Pavement
Powerman 5000
The Randies
Reina
Royce Da 5'9"
RX Bandits
RX Bandits
RX Bandits
Scum of the Earth
Blake Shelton
T.G. Sheppard
Beanie Sigel
Simple Plan
Sixpence None...Richer
Michael W. Smith
Soledad Brothers
Son, Ambulance
The Starting Line
The Starting Line
Steel Train
Steel Train
Sugarland
Tangerine Dream
Carla Thomas
Three Days Grace
Trick Pony



Here I Go Again
Cockahoop
Psalms, Hymns and ...
Motown 2
Government Commissions...
Forty Hour Train Back to...
Has a Gambling Problem
It Always Will Be
Off the Beaten Path
One Love
From the Screen to Your...
Crooked Rain, Crooked Rain
The Good, the Bad & The...
At the Friendship Motor Inn
TBA
M.I.C.
Halfway Between Here...
Progress
The Resignation
Blah Blah Blah... Love...
Blake Shelton's Barn & Grill
Timeless
The B-Coming
Still Not Getting Any?
Best Of
Healing Rain
Voice of Treason
Key
The Make Yourself at...EP
With Hopes of Starting Over
1969
For You My Dear
Twice the Speed of Life
An Introduction To...
Carla
(Ltd. Ed. W/ Bonus DVD)
R.I.D.E.

BEANIE SIGEL

The B-Sides
New set from legally
beleaguered Philly rapper

UFO
Unkle
Various Artists
Various Artists
Various Artists
Various Artists
Various Artists
Various Artists
Dionne Warwick
Bob Weir
Bob Weir
Bob Weir
Bob Weir
Bob Weir
Lucinda Williams
Wu-Tang Clan

Flying: The Early Years
Never Never Land
Best of House Vol. Four
Dancehall Delinquents
Jesus: A Collection of...
MTV2 Shortlist Prize
Best of Celtic Christmas
This Is Reggae... Golden Era
My Favorite Time of the Year
Ace
Bobby & The Midnites
Evening Moods
Heaven Help the Fool
Live
Live @ The Fillmore West
Legend...Greatest Hits

NOVEMBER 2

AFI
Afroman
The Black Swans
Duran Duran
Hopesfall
The Minus 5
A Perfect Circle
Bud Powell
Rammstein
LeAnn Rimes
Strung Out
Ruben Studdard
Team Sleep
Darryl Worley
Trisha Yearwood

AFI
Jobe Bells
Who Will Walk in the...
Singles Box Vol. 2
A Types
The Minus at the Organ
aMOTION
...Be Bop Piano: 1944-51
Reise Reise
This Woman
Exile in Oblivion
TBA (Gospel album)
Team Sleep
Darryl Worley
TBA

NOVEMBER 9

Clay Aiken
Tony Bennett
Andrea Bocelli
Neko Case

TBA (Christmas album)
The Art of Romance
Andrea
The Tigers Have Spoken



A PERFECT CIRCLE

11/2

amOTION

"Counting Bodies Like Sheep To
The Rhythm Of The War Drums"
and other Election Day favorites

NOVEMBER 16

Fantasia Barrino
Black Eyed Peas
Bon Jovi
Jeremy Camp
Chingy
Collective Soul
Destiny's Child
Eminem
Fat Joe
Aretha Franklin
Heather Headley
Hoods/Freya
Joy & The Boy
Kenny G

TBA
Monkey Business
100 Million Bon Jovi Fans...
Restored
Powerballin'
Youth
TBA
Encore
Things of That Nature
TBA
TBA
Split
Soaking Wet
TBA



HANDSOME BOY MODELING SCHOOL

11/9

White People

Prince Paul and Dan the Automa-
tor give a shout out to that most
misunderstood of races

The Coup
Will Downing
Edo G
Vestal Goodman
Handsome Boy...School
The Innocence Mission
John Wells
Toby Keith
Mannie Fresh
Mario
Restless Heart
Linda Ronstadt
Screaming Trees
Soundtrack
Soundtrack
Trick Daddy
Shania Twain
Vanilla Fudge
Various Artists

Party Music
Christmas, Love and You
My Own Worst Enemy
The Gift of Love
White People
Now the Day Is Over
The Dash
Greatest Hits 1999-2003
TBA
Here I Go Again
Still Restless
Hummin' to Myself
Ocean of Confusion: Songs...
Monster Garage Vol. 1
Monster Garage Vol. 2
Thug Matrimony
Greatest Hits
TBA
Gospel's Top 20 Songs...

Kings of Tomorrow
Lil Jon & East Side Boyz
The Royals
Wayne Shorter
Luke Slater
Snoop Dogg
Britney Spears

Trouble
Crunk Juice
Dubbing With the Royals
Footprints: The Life and...
Fear & Loathing 2
R&G: The Masterpiece
Greatest Hits: My Prerogative

NOVEMBER 23

Kurt Carr

One Church

Dog Fashion Disco
Nirvana
Santana
Jessica Simpson
TRU
U2

The City Is Alive Tonight
TBA (box set)
TBA
TBA (Christmas album)
The Truth
TBA

NOVEMBER 30

Dirty Vegas
Yung Wun

One
The Dirtiest Thirstiest

DECEMBER 17

Slim Thug
T.I.
Luther Vandross

Already Platinum
Urban Legend
To Luther With Love...Tribute

DECEMBER 28

Judas Priest

TBA

JANUARY 11

Pat Metheny Group
Ken Navarro
David Sanborn

TBA
Love Coloured Soul
TBA

JANUARY 25

Jessi Alexander
Joe Cocker
Joi

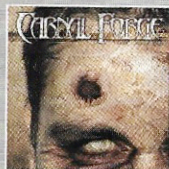
Honesuckle Sweet
Heart & Soul
Tennessee Slim Is the Bomb

FEBRUARY 8

3 Doors Down
Crowbar
Krayzie Bone
Open Hand
The Relativez

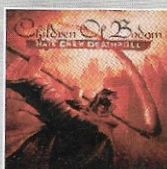
TBA
Life's Blood for the...
Gemini: Good vs. Evil
You and Me
Money Respect Money

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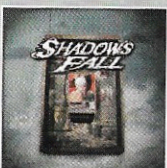
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ass!" - Fear Factory
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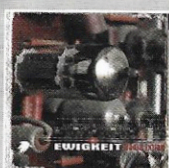
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Shadows Fall ride the
lightning to great-
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shadowsfall.com

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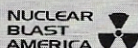
Radio Ixtlan is the
Dark Side of the
Moon for the Death
Metal generation.

Ewigkeit
Radio Ixtlan
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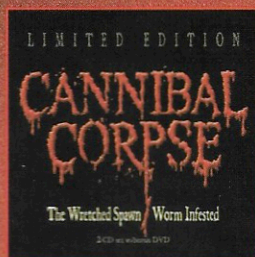


Finland, the land of
eternal darkness
gives us Wintersun
and their self-titled
debut album that is
destined to become
a classic! Fusing
melodic death metal
with black metal
griminess, the band
have created a chilling
masterpiece!!

Wintersun
Wintersun
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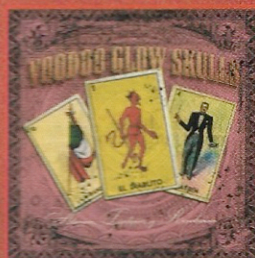
Cannibal Corpse
The Wretched Spawn/
Worm Infested
Specially-priced limited edition 2 CD
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The new mix CD from America's
#1 female DJ featuring tracks from Paul van
Dyk, Tiesto, Armin van Buuren, and Cajmere.
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Fates Warning
FWX
First new studio release in four years,
coming off their big 2003 tour with
Dream Theater and Queensryche.
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Voodoo Glowskulls
Addicion, Tradicion y Revolucion
Second Victory release from the band
that blends punk, metal, ska, and
latin music.
\$9.99 Victory



Colonel Claypool's Bucket of Bernie Brains
The Big Eyeball in the Sky
Les Claypool returns with a unique
concoction of three trail-blazing bands
- Primus, Parliament, and Praxis.
\$11.97 Prawn Song



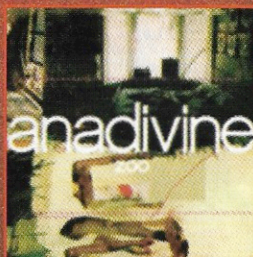
King Diamond
Deadly Lullabies Live
The first official live release in the
King's long, celebrated career;
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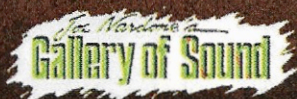
It Dies Today
The Caitiff Choir
Buffalo hardcore for fans of
Killswitch Engage, Thrice, and
Eighteen Visions.
\$9.99 Trustkill



Reeve Oliver
Reeve Oliver
San Diego pop-punk band's first full-length.
They've toured with Yellowcard, Switchfoot, the
Ataris, and Pennywise.
\$9.99 Militia Group



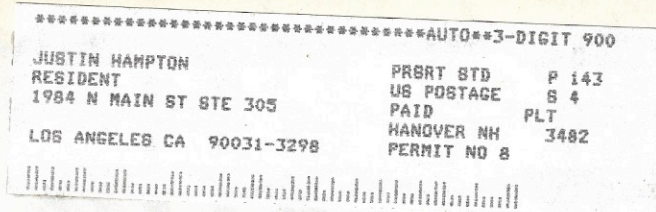
Anadivine
Zoo
Follow-up to last year's highly
acclaimed EP, they're part of the
exploding upstate NY music scene,
along with Coheed and Cambria.
\$9.99 Militia Group



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Viewmont Mall 969-0778
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Laurel Mall 459-1093

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